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Henry Porter on the triumph of trivia Decline of the intellectual

G2 with European weather

France edges towards the 'pernicious' Net

G2 pages 10/13

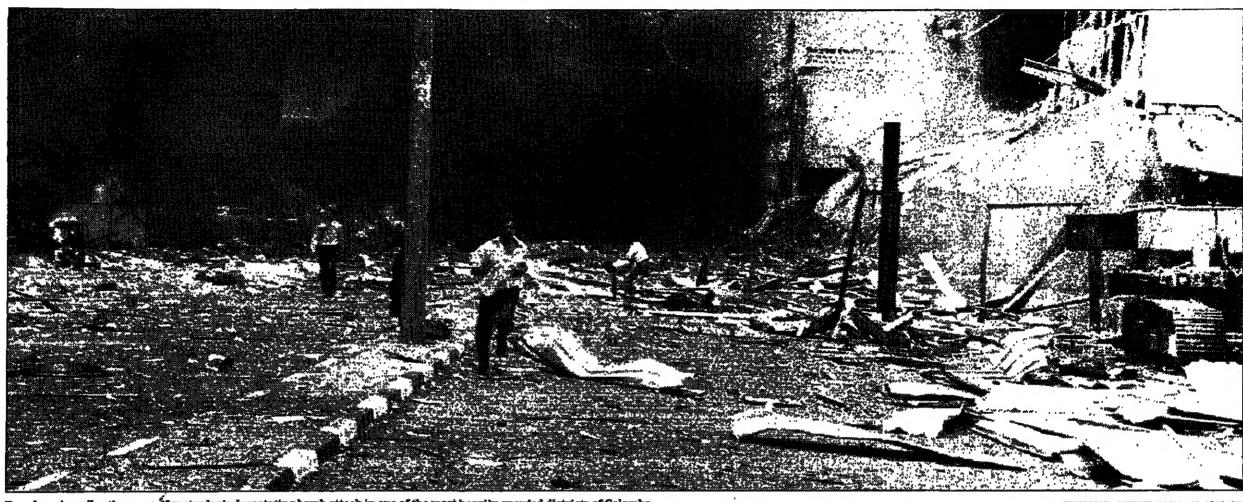
The triumphant return of **Jean-Paul Belmondo**

G2 page 8



Tamil separatists blamed for devastating retaliation against army gains

Tiger massacre in Colombo



Dazed workers flee the scene of yesterday's devastating bomb attack in one of the most heavily guarded districts of Colombo

and Mohan Samarasir of Reuter in Colombo

RI LANKA paid in blood yester-day for its victories over the Tamil Tiger guerdevastating truck bomb gutof Colombo, killing at least 55 people and wounding about 1,400 others.

Although Tiger officials at their offices in London dis-claimed knowledge of the blast, government officials in the Sri Lankan capital said the suicide bomb — which follows rebel mini-state in the northern Jaffna peninsula — bore the guerrillas' hallmark.

The explosion — the most powerful in a 12-year war that no longer knows its the control of the most powerful in a 12-year war that no longer knows its the control of the most powerful in a 12-year war that no longer knows its the control of the most powerful in the blast. the capture in December of the

Tigers]." Brigadier Sarath Munasinghe, the military's spokesman, said. "Who else would have done a thing like

Doctors at Colombo's general hospital said 55 people were killed outright in the suicide attack, but one private radio station put the death toll at 91. More than 100 ted 10 buildings in the heart of those admitted to hospital were seriously injured.
The health minister, A.H.M.

Fowzie, told reporters: "I be-lieve the death toll could rise as there are still many bodies trapped in the rubble."
The governor of the central bank, A.S. Jayewardene, said on television that 40 of its em-

ployees died in the blast.



curred on a busy morning truck and began firing at ran-Colombo's financial district. be carrying about 400lb of explosives — careered into a gate at the bank's entrance. people jumped from a moving

trying to flee but said they believed others died in the blast. Witnesses described a scene that looked like the aftermath of an earthquake, with an 8ft crater at its centre.

"It was like a dozen Tower ing Infernos," said a local journalist. Other banks and commer-

cial establishments were in a multi-storey car park de-stroyed. Newspaper kiosks vanished in the explosion, which occurred at about felt up to three miles away. Massive clouds of black

smoke and flame spewed from nearby office blocks as hundreds of dazed and wounded

ground and gaping holes were punched in walls. The wounded clung for support to walls and railings.

which quickly became red with blood. Helicopters dropped water to douse the fires, while fire-men rescued stranded office workers from roofs.

Yesterday's blast occurred in one of the most highly guarded areas in the capital

— already a city under siege.

The presidential secretariat,
the foreign ministry and

naval headquarters are just a few hundred yards away. Two nearby hotels were severely damaged in the blast, and several tourists were reportedly injured, belypeople fled.

Witnesses said windows ing government claims that the island is again safe.

porting the mutual cause which has generally given customers a better deal than

banks. The Nationwide is

now seen to be crucial to the

as mutual organsiations. Nationwide's chief execu

tive, Brian Davies, said: "Cus

tomers have always preferred

| down, lifts plummeted to the | fears for the safety of the Aus- | underscores her vulnerability tralian cricket team, who are due to play Sri Lanka in Coaffect the government's efforts lombo in their opening World to win support from the majority Sinimiese community for peace proposals aimed at ending the war Cup match on February 17.

Send a baby box to

Bosnia this winter

Bobby Simpson asked: "Who wants to be around when bombs are going off?" In Colombo only the strip of coastal road fronting the residence of President Chandrika Kumaratunga is more heavily guarded than the district hit

tunga has rarely strayed from

the compound, and the blast

Disinfectant, nappies, washing materials – not what you'd

think of giving someone. But

child safe from infection, the

Feed the Children will deliver

your box directly into the hands

basic essentials inside one of

our baby boxes would mean

of mothers in Bosnia -

many of whom will

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mother keep her baby safe.

this winter - help a

be sheltering in

freezing schools,

factories, and

bombed-out

this winter.

Name (cops)

houses

the world.

for a desperate mother in

Bosnia trying to keep her

They are considering forfeit-ing the game. Their coach

longer protect the country's capital, even while the military has been mopping up the remaining pockets under Tiger control in the east.
Two weeks ago, the governyesterday. In the last six months, President Kumarament put its peace package be-

Turn to page 2, column 7

It is already clear that the

Sri Lankan authorities can no

MPs under fire for pay claim

Michael White Political Editor

HE latest backbench campaign to raise MPs' pay backfired last night amid furious denunciations of political insensitivity from poverty lobbyists and disaf-fected voters. Downing Street reacted warily to the motion, signed by nearly 300 of the 651 sitting MPs. to refer the hyper-sensitive issue of their own and ministerial pay to Lord Nolan's committee on standards in public life.

So did a seemingly-reluctant Lord Nolan, whose terms of reference would have to be revised should John Major endorse the move. The hot potato could alternatively be passed to the Senior Salaries Review Body, an option being canvassed by some ministers.

The row re-opened the issue of outside work done by some MPs. Unions said it was as-tonishing that while workers' pay was going down, MPs were trying to raise their own salaries, and poverty campaigners, angry at years of ever-lower wages for the un-skilled, protested that MPs were trying to cocoon themelves from reality. Voters in-

terviewed for radio and television were equally dismissive.

What prompted spontaneous grassroots anger was the way the motion was pre-sented as a demand for a near-doubling of the current £34,085 a year, a claim being privately advanced mainly by Tories feeling the post-Nolan squeeze on outside earnings.
Tony Blair and Paddy Ashdown both stressed the importance of having an indepen-

dent mechanism for indexing MPs' pay to an outside group. But the Liberal Democrat leader said that he was happy with the present level, while Mr Blair's office said: "Higher pay for MPs is not a priority for an incoming Labour government".

The Leader of the Com-

mons, Tony Newton, has been quietly investigating ways of sparing MPs the embarrassment of having an annual hattle with the Government. Allowing for inflation, MPs pay has been static in post-inflation terms for 30 years while average pay has risen by 80 per cent. Sir Terence Higgins, spokesman for the campaign, stressed.

Share payout for millions after building society joins the bank wagon

MORE THAN 34 million people are expected to get an average of £1,000 each after the Alliance & Leicester building society announced its stock market flotation

yesterday.

Months of speculation, which forced it to close its doors to new members, ended when Britain's fourth largest building society, with assets of £23 billion, decided to convert to being a bank as quickly as possible.

But the tens of thousands of speculators who piled in after December 31 will not get any of the free shares that come with the flotation which could

value the group at about £3 billion. The society has refused to say how big the windfall will be for the more than three million borrowers and 500,000 savers or how it will be structured, but the handouts will go to those who had at least £100 in their accounts, or loans of £100 or more, on December 31. Savers

least two years will receive extra shares based on the size of their balances. However the society's plans could be undermined if a predator moved in and offered members more to take vide and develop the banking over the society. City experts services we offer our corpo-believe the Alliance is more rate customers". He denied vulnerable to predators than | that the society would be on

who have had accounts for at

cause of the unique structure leaves only one big building of its business, with its society, the Nationwide, supof its business, with its ownership of Girobank. Peter White, Alliance group chief executive, said that after more than a year's deliberation on whether to change status, Abbey National's predatory move against the National & Provincial tipped

the board in favour.

Mr George's advice.

But conversion would open a new chapter in the sociey's history, allowing it to "expand our share of the residen-

building societies because they believe they get a better service. Perhaps of late we have taken that loyalty for granted, and now its time to prove, what everyone already knows — that building societ ies will always be cheaper in the long run, than banks."

the Woolwich, which recently announced its flotation, be The Alliance's decision page 12

Notebook, page 11: Outlook

Further cut in base rate looks likely in wake of US move

Mark Tran in New York and Larry Elliott

THE prospect of a fresh cut in British borrowing costs was looming large last night after America's central bank cut its interest rates to boost growth.

Despite evidence yesterday that the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, and the Governor of over base rates, the move by | the US Federal Reserve was being seen by dealers as the trigger for reductions else-

With economic expansion in Germany and France slowing, speculation was mounting that the Bundesbank might spring a surprise at election will mean at least the rate banks charge each today's council meeting and one more quarter-point cut. sher for short term loans reduce official German rates. Gerard Lyons, chief economist with Japanese bank the Bank of England, Eddie mist with Japanese bank Yesterday's move by the George, are already at odds DKB, said that by March, Fed came after a meeting of Notebook, page 11

"there would be scope for its policy-making Open Marlower rates in the UK, what ket Committee and amid ever Eddie George says". mounting evidence that the US economy has weakened. British base rates have come down from 6.75 per cent The discount rate, which to 6.25 per cent in two stages since the Budget, but most analysts believe keeping the economy robust ahead of the

the Fed charges to member banks for loans, came down to 5 per cent from 5.25 per cent, while the federal funds rate even if that means spurning came form to 5.25 per cent Mr George's advice.

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Districtes 10

Women 4/5 Cartoons 15 Screen 8/9

Sketch

whines and dosh

parties. How much wine and

heese did they have to stuff

into fugitive-from-justice Asil Nadir? He gave them £400,000,

and they were so careless with

the papers that they could not provide the Official Receiver

with the relevant facts and

figures. "There is a strong statisti-

cal correlation between the provision of funds to the Tory

party, and peerages, knight-

I imagine Princess Di glows

after an enema. Clearly the

someone who could match

him for meanness, scorn, fe-

Cometh the hour, cometh the bastard, and David Shaw

brought "more than a whiff of hypocrisy. The stench of hy-

pocrisy around this bill is like

the stench in the sewers be-

fore we privatised the water

The news that human or-dure now smells sweeter as a result of Tory policies was a surprise, but Mr Shaw surged

quickly on. He painted a vivid

"The chicken may not be as nice as it might be, but at least

we know we are raising an

honest penny! We don't just ring up a friendly union

leader, we do it by a lot of hard work!" Particularly if your

teeth don't fit. Mr Shaw found numerous

Labour's secret funding by the union. At each revelation

he would say: It's an example of saying one thing and doing

Each time his fellow Con-

last three words. As they chorused: "... and doing another!" it should have sound-

ed like a jolly pantomime (one vaguely imagined Mr Shaw

that!") but it had an end-of-run

the mantras chanted by those

gloomy Hare Krishnas you se

shivering in our city centres though why pacifists might be in today's House of Com-

mons, I cannot begin to think.

veiling "Come on, boys and girls, you can do better than

feel to it, lacking gusto. Instead it sounded more like

servatives would join in on the

picture of poverty-stricken

sume wine and cheese and

(C. Dover) rose. The bill

rocity, intemperance and wild

Mr Spellar looked pleased to have got all that out, rather as

hoods and places on

allegation.



Simon Hoggart

"HE great battles of history - Agincourt, Gettys-burg, the Labour Party Conference — have always spawned smaller skirmishes on the side. Carthorses haul the rotting corpses from the main engagement, but years later a pile of bones is found in a spinney, or a ploughman's harrow unearths a mangled

In the same manner there are smaller affrays in Parliament, hard to hear above the pounding artillery fired by the party leaders, but equally vi-cious, equally pitiless. One came yesterday after-

noon. In front of a largely empty House (few had stayed for Scottish questions, fewer were tempted in by the prospect of Gummer on local gov ernment finance), John Spellar (Lab. Warley W)
introduced a 10-Minute Rule

bill. These never become law, so they exist only for MPs to raise a pet subject, or, as in this case, make a venomous attack on the other side. Mr Spellar's bill is called

Regulation of Funding of Polit-ical Parties, It bears the same relationship to legislation as the phrase "Who the f*** are you looking at?" does to polite

Mr Spellar said that Conservative funding was "shrouded in mystery and obscurity, and the Prime Minister wants to keep it that way. What a perfect example of saying one thing and meaning another!" he exclaimed, taunting the favourite phrase of the

Then he got down to the business. Downing Street was being openly used for Tory party fund-raising. The For-eign Secretary had been seeking money for the party in Hong Kong, even though he

was there at public expense. "The Prime Minister says that the Tories raise all their money with wine and cheese

Labour drops all-women shortlists Wine and cheese, to safeguard chosen candidates



Pola Manzila Uddin . . . favourite for Bethnal Green and Bow now faces battle with male rivals PHOTOGRAPH: MARTIN ARGUES discrimination.

Patrick Wintour, Chief Political Correspondent

ABOUR yesterday jettisoned its policy of all-women shortlists after lawyers warned it could not risk an appeal that might leave as many as 70 parliamentary selections in limbo right up to the gen-

The move follows the recent industrial tribunal ruling that the policy, aimed at increasing the number of Labour women MPs in the House of Commons, breached Britain's sex discrimination laws. At its meeting in Lon-don yesterday the NEC unanimously agreed not to appeal against the ruling, on the basis of legal advice. The NEC was also warned

that if it appealed and lost the lawfulness of the 35 selections already made from all-women shortlists would be jeopar-dised As it is, the 35 women candidates in Labour target seats are regarded as legally unaffected, virtually ensuring an unprecedented boost to

Fresh selections open to men will immediately go ahead in the 10 constituencies which had already started to select from all-women lists. The national party is hoping that many of these constituencies will voluntarily choose women candidates.

However, in a move that has infurlated some local parties, the NEC has decided to defer selections in another 10 the abysmal record of the

Labour MPs are retiring.
The postponement will give
a special working party, including John Prescott, the deputy leader, at least a month to see if any lawful month to see if any lawful means can be found to exhort these seats to select women.

Labour had been hoping to persuade half of these seats to select women. However, the selectorate." party is facing intense opposi-tion from local parties, such as Jarrow, Wansbeck, and Washington, where favourite sons have been groomed for Since the NEC had

scrapped its previous rules requiring each party to include at least one woman on make up its education policy every shortlist, it now has virtually no legal armoury to ing the Tories with a slogan enforce positive likely to be used against the

John Evens and Dennis Skinner voted against the one month delay arguing the seats needed candidates as soon as possible.

Clare Short, the former party women's spokeswoman, said she hoped all good party members would do every thing possible to select

women candidates. NEC member and Hackney North MP Dianne Abbott said: "Given the legal advice that we had and the immi-nence of the general election we had no choice, but I think

it is very sad." The issue has caused huge controversy within the party, espcially once the NEC felt forced to impose all-women shortlists on some recalci-trant parties. Tony Blair had never hidden his distaste for the procedure, but he also recognised the party needed to do something to address the relative unpopularity of the party with older women

Labour officials insisted that the party still expected to more than double its current tally of 39 women MPs at the

In an unrepentant state-ment, the NEC said: "In addi-tion to our 89 Labour women MPs, Labour currently have 40 women candidates selected to fight winnable seats comwomen candidates. In total Labour have 132 women can-

seats, mainly in the North Tory Party and is something and Yorkshire, in which of which we can be rightly

The Conservative Party deputy chairman, Michael Trend, tried to exploit the de cision as another sign of

The NEC heard an apology from the Shadow Health Secretary, Harriet Harman, over the political damage her deci-sion to send one of her children to grammar schools had caused the party.

John Evans said her decision had forced the party to on the hoof, as well as provid-

Review

Calling the dog in for dinner

Caroline Sullivan Melissa Etheridge Shepherds Bush Empire

"HE words "lesbian" and "guitor rocker" are rarely seen in close prox insity, making Melissa Etherdge, who is both, a pioneer. k d lang may have opened the sters but musically she stays within typically female genres; the leather-lary nxed Etheridge, on the other hand, treads on men's toes. Since coming out three years ago at Bill Clinton's inaugural ball. the Kansas singer has brought face-to-face with leshianism for the first time.

She is one of the few women to have ventured into the bluecollar end of rock inhabited by the likes of Brian Adams. It has certainly reaped rewards for her in America, where her five albums have sold 5 million copies: but her penchant for such moribund music is both painful and mystifying love her. Her latest album.

of thing hest left to men. Faus of the style cite its honesty and lack of pretension. qualities Etheridge personifics. Take the lack of pretention: she sings in the openthroated rasp of one calling a dog in for dunner, and competently plays a guitar slung in front of her bedenumed belly.

And honesty? Her face is so sincerous she sings lines like h's 3.26.im and I've got nothing left I can say" that you would not hesitate to buy a secondhaud car from her. The

working-class hero persona has been making careers sind rock was invented: Bruce Springsteen built an empire on less. Etheridge, however. does not possess the magic that can make songs about Midwestern suburbs special. What she does have is codies of perkiness. That sets her spart from her largely female audience, who grimly cheere every identical sounding riff. Etheridge seems a sort of nice gal's gal who might not take to women in Lesbian Avengers T shuts.

Few of the tunes are gender specific, and even fewer have anything you describe as a po litical content; an exception was the very long Shriner's Park, but that was more concerned with disenchantment with the American dream than with being fornous, fe-

male and gay. Essentially, Etheridge's repertoire is full of generic love-songs that would sound the same wailed by Brian Ad ams or Belinda Carlisle. The difference is that they usually manage to insert a couple of hooklines in their tunes. The male bassist, drummer and guitarist did their best to impart life, but there is only so much a fellow can do.

Yet the set was received with genuflecting capture. Such a reaction would be understandable in America, where almost any female with an electric guitar excites slack-jawed admiration; London audiences are more discriminating, so why was this sold-out house so excited about such unexciting music

This review appeared in later

Opportunity knocks again for party men as selection of candidate is thrown open in safe seats

POLA Manzila Uddin still has high hopes of becoming the first Asian woman MP, but she will have to beat male rivals now women-only shortlists have been dropped.

Mrs Uddin was widely tipped to become Labour's candidate for Bethnal Green and Bow, one of the party's safest seats in east ondon, when the contest was restricted to women. Yesterday's decision

means the contest is offi-cially frozen for a month, but is expected to be list after the tensions that who contested the seat in have picked candidates man Mike Thorpe, and a thrown open. "The party's built up between the sup- 1992. Leeds councillor Fa- from all-women shortlists, challenge seems unlikely.

faced with a general short- i not." savs Mrs Uddin. Leading male contenders

cluding the mayor of Tower Hamlets, Gulam Mortuza, and the education committee chairman, Abdul Asad. It already seems odds-on that Labour's candidate will be from the Bengali community, especially as the Conservatives have picked a Bengali candidate,

Dr Kaber Choudhury. Party officials were rather relieved to be able to impose an all-women short-

porters of different Bangia-bian Hamilton was being but in law it is open to deshi candidates. They fear encouraged by party membrate a free-for-all will in-bers yesterday to apply. vite a return of all the are ready to throw their membership irregularities hats back in the ring, in- and suspensions they encountered last year.

But some of the northern constituencies that would have had to choose from vomen-only shortlists now seem likely to pick men. Leeds North-east, who picked Liz Davies only to have her rejected by the National Executive last year, could turn to the man

Mrs Uddin, deputy leader of the council, aged 36, may seem like a safer bet.

and Mexborough, Went-worth, Bradford West, Doncaster Central, Leiceste

encouraged by party mem-bers yesterday to apply. the requirement to have an all-women shortlist will attract a scramble among Labour hopefuls. They in-clude Jarrow, Houghton and Washington East, Wansbeck, Barnsley East

West, and Gower in Wales. Labour has said it doe not intend to re-run the selections in 35 seats that

Another nine mainly in a few seats all-women sorthern safe Labour seats shortlists were imposed against working. tion of local activists or for mer candidates. In Slough Berkshire, Labour's 1992 candidate Eddie Lopez, beaten by 514 votes in the election, put up a fight against women-only short-

lists. When one was imposed, his wife Brenda tried to win the candidacy, but was beaten by Flona Mactaggart, chairwoman of Liberty. She has been backed by local party chair-



Ecstasy death caused by water Tamil Tigers blamed for massive

Alex Bellos

CSTASY victim Leah
Betts probably died
from a combination of the drug and drinking too much water, an inquest was told yesterday.

The Essex A-level student.

who fell into a coma at her 18th birthday party last No-vember, had used drugs, including ecstasy, before, the inquest at Chelmsford, heard. John Henry, consultant ian at the National Po sons Unit, said the most likely reason for her death was that the water she drank made her brain cells swell, causing brain damage. For a small number of people the drug hindered the kidneys' ability to process water so drinking only a few litres was enough to saturate the brain. Tests showed she had drunk more than three litres.

days after taking the drug at her home in Maldon, Essex. The coroner, Dr Malcolm Weir, recorded a verdict of accidental death caused by nondependent use of drugs. Leah's friend Sarah Cargill.

in a statement read out in court, said she had taken ec stasy four times with Leah. They had also once bought a £5 bag of "speed", a powdered amphetamine. in Raquel's Nightclub in Basildon.

wanted to take ecstasy at the party and contacted a friend whose boy friend could get some. They took a tablet each at about 8pm.
Sarah said she saw Leah smoking cannabis and drinking alcohol during the party.
"At around midnight Leah

said she was feeling unwell

or seven cups."
Paul and Janet Betts, her

father and step-mother, who were at the party, said their son, William, told them Leah was unwell. Mrs Betts saw Leah "looking like something out of a horror film". Her pu-pils were very dilated and she vomited violently into the lavatory.
"Then she said her face was

going numb, then she said her going nume, then she said her legs were going numb, at which stage her legs collapsed," Mrs Betts said.

Both parents moved her, screaming with pain in her head and stomach, into her bedroom to lay her down in the recovery position. They had difficulty at first as her were moving

controllably. Once she was still she started to snore. Mr Betts, a "If Leah had taken the drug and they went upstairs to the former policeman, then no place which caused her alone she might well have bathroom. On the way up she ticed she had stopped breath- death," he said.

survived. If she had drunk the | fell over. She couldn't walk | lng. "There was no sound; amount of water alone she | properly. She started drink | there was no movement. It would have survived." | ing water, I believe about six | was one of those things where you don't really believe it." He cave her resuscitation mouth to mouth until an am

bulance arrived. In the faw minutes before she lost consciousness Leah told her father she had taken ecstasy twice before. Those tablets had been embosse with a dove but the fatal tab-let had an apple motif.

Doctor Alistair Short, who
was on duty at the Broomfield

Hospital when Leah arrived, said her brain showed evidence of "coning", when swelling causes the brain to squash downwards in a cone shape, often inducing a coma. After the inquest, Mr Betts said he and his wife hoped young people would get the message that it was ecstasy that killed their child and not

water. "It was the drug in the first suicide bombing in Colombo

continued from page 1 fore parliament, where it must win the support of a twothirds majority before being put to a referendum. The plan proposes devolving power to regional councils. The government said yester-

day's attack was intended to enrage hardliners among the majority Sinhalese commu-nity who have been opposing any concession to the Tamil minority. The Tigers have rejected the package.
"It is unfortunate that it

comes at a time when the goverument has so emphatically placed before the country, and is seeking to arrive at a consensus on, the devolution of power to redress Tamil grievances," said Ravinath Aryasinghe, a foreign minister

Mr Aryasinghe said the the problem is solved, they will be marginalised."

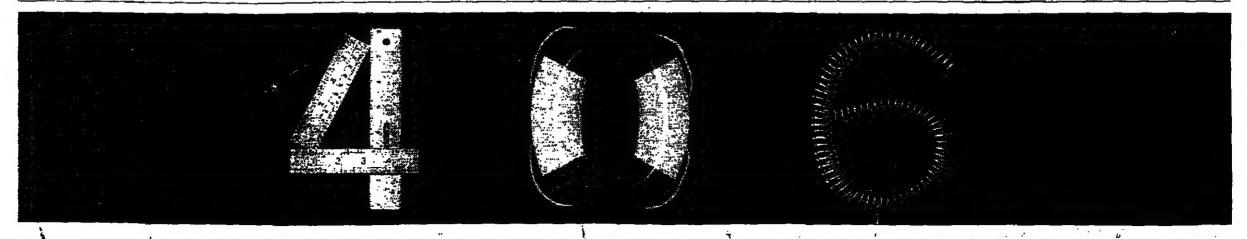
At the weekend, President they are deployed as human kumaratunga met more than bombs.

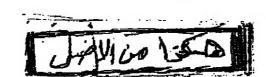
effort to win their support for the plan, which would give regional councils power over land, police and investment.

She repeated her argument, by now familiar, that the crisis is political and ethnic in nature — and not merely terrorism that can be fought with military force.

However, yesterday's attack gives the upper hand to Sinha-lese hawks and will make it more difficult to sell Mrs Ku-maratunga's peace plan. It was widely expected that the Tigers would hit the capital in retaliation for the loss of their military headquarters — the guerrillas are potorious for

their patience. Police investigations into the suicide bombings that mark have uncovered an intricate system of "sleepers" who inflitrate the capital months.





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New issue OUT NOW!



There's no point

Video tales from the gospel push **Pocahontas** off her perch

Madeleire Bunting Religious Affairs Editos

Nero has launched a po-grom of Christians. At risk

orphans they have taken under their wing. What follows is 13 action-

packed animated videos, charting their fortunes as they pit their wits — and faith against the evil Nero and his sycophantic benchmen. This is The Story Keepers, which took the American

home video market by storm when the first instalment stole a march on Disney's Po-calontas, beating it to the top

of the charts last month. What galls the multi-mil-ison pound animation indushave missed out on the poten-tial of one of the oldest stories of all — the Gospel. For woven into the adventures of the first-century family are large chunks of the life of fellow Christians in the

The man behind the video hit is a retired lecturer and dist minister, the Rev Brian Brown, who spent 10 years trudging around church leaders trying to find backers for his dream of bringing the Good News to an

years a lecturer in religious education at Oxford Polytech-nic, mortgaged his house sev-eral times over and even flew to the Vatican to pray with the Pope's advisar on televi-sion as part of his lobbying

Finally, a coalition of Irish churches introduced him to Christian businessmen who put up the £4 million to make based team of animators. Ten per cent of profits will go back to the Irish churches

Mr Brown yesterday told representatives of British churches at the first British desperately worried about the biblical illiteracy of young people. This is a tool of evan-gelism, bringing the word of

500,000 copies per episode in the US — another two epi-sodes are being released in March — and the interest of It is not often that the Dear of Christchurch College, the major companies has now been triggered. Mr Brown is Archbishop of Dublin and a host of other biblical and negotiating with British broadcasters and video comnames on the credits of

THE UNIVERSITY OF JORDAN

LIBRARY

But, as Mr Brown ex-plained, Story Keepers is the fruit of years of ecumenical age groups — is due out in Britain and the US next and has won the approval of Christians as diverse as the month. Story Keepers will also come out on CD Rom. Vatican and Bible Belt Amer

Representatives from the Salvation Army, the United Reform and Baptist churches were delighted, and nobody was carping about conum cialisation. As the Rev Geoff Shattock, a Baptist minister, duce the Gospel in a Christian era."

"I am rich.

denying it."

Split reaction as Eva Peron's ghost walks

Calvin Sins In Bueno: Aires

ATZONS at the Patago-ATIONS at the Patago-nia restaurant in Bue-nos Aires were expect-ing a catet dinner when, suddenly! the wail of sirens pierced the air. In walked Ma-donna — but she looked like Eva Perós, dressed in a 1950s black, fitted dress with a big skirt, her hair in a chignon and her bue eyes now brown. "The whole room gasped," said Court Hay, an American writer who was in the restau-rant. "It was the ghost of Eva Parrin"

Controversy about Madon-na's suitability to play the former Argentine first lady has surrounded the singer since she arrived in Buenos Aires almost a lortnight ago to star in the film of Andrew Lloyd

Webber's musical Evita.
It is no hard to see why the produceri picked a pop star experienced at playing sexu-ally charged roles for the part of Peron in a film expected to portray Argentina's legend-ary first ady as an opportun-ist who slept her way to power. But a bitter debate continue over whether she is fit to portray Perón, whom many Argentines consider a

Every day, hundreds of screaming fans, many with "Madonia, we love you" scrawled across their bodies, gather outside her hotel.

"Madenna is the right choice for this movie because she, like Evita, is one of the common beople," said Jorge Gutierrez, a transvestite ed in a garish lace outfit like one hat was similar to one waich was her

It is precisely that image which offends die hard Peronists. They maintain that Madonna is unfit to portray the wife of General Juan Peron, the populist strong-man who dominated post-war Argentine politics for nearly

three decales. Days before Madonna had arrived in Buenos Aires, hardliners had scrawled graffiti around the capital that read: "Evia lives! Madonna, get out!" The Argentine presiist, told newspapers that the Screen, G2 page 8 dent. Caries Menem. a Peron-



Madonna . . . 'unsuitable' say local politicos

musical is "a libelious inter pretation of Evita's life" and for the role.

Congressional deputies have called for Madonna, her co-star, Antonio Banderas, the film's director, Alan Parker, and the rest of the cast to be declared persona non grata.

These sharply contrasting sentiments about a film that has yet to begin production and is not scheduled for release until Novamber illus trate the depth of feeling still engendered in Argentina by the name Perón, 43 years after Evita's death and 21 years after the death of her husband. Each year on Evita's birthday, on Peronist Day, and on the anniversary of her death, devotees take roses and wreaths to the fam-

Maria Eva Duarte de Perón came to Buenos Aires from the Argentine provinces at the age of 15 and became a model and B-movie actress. Through her wits and dalliances, she rose to become the mistress of Gen Peron, whom she married while he was Argentina's vice-president, subsequently to become presi dent. As the country's first lady, she built hospitals, schools and nurseries and pushed through women's suf-frage. Her visits to lepers,

lunches with the poor, and attacks on wealth — became

legendary.

Ministers pass tax buck to councils

and increased the pressure on | 2p in the pound on income | top priorities," he said. Ministers faced with

wipe-out in the May local elections prepared to blame Liberal Democrat- and Labour-run councils for large rises in local taxes despite Treasury forecasts that average bills could rise by 8 per

The Government even relaxed some spending curbs yesterday on the proviso that the extra money went to edu-cation and social services or to police authorities as Whitehall grant rises by 2.8 per cent and overall spending by 3.2 per cent.

But the tactic, made clear as MPs confirmed next year's local government spending settlement, provoked outrage from the Opposition, which accused ministers of effec-tively taking back half of the

horror stories of excess under municipal socialism resurfacing in the run-up to the general election, said that council tax payers would face a £3.5 billion extra bill over the spending back last \$3.5 billion extra bill over night to local authorities three years — equivalent to

> Fire brigades, help for the elderly, and other services all faced cuts next year as a result of what Opposition MPs described as the "fantasy finance racket" operated by the Tories in the way grants were determined.

These favoured the 13 or 14 Tory-run authorities, espe-cially Westminster council in

The political arm-wrestling in the Commons came as social service chiefs warned that care homes and day centres might close, and charges for home helps and day centres rise, because the Govern-ment had short-changed local authorities by nearly £100

John Gummer, the Environment Secretary, told the Commons: "We take the view that local taxpayers should properly fund a slighly larger ing with one band and taking believe that £141 million is Ip in the pound income tax that local taxpayers should ample of the Government announced in the Budget. In the Budget properly fund a slightly larger ing with one hand an announced in the Budget. In the pound income tax that local taxpayers should ample of the Government announced in the Budget.

their local services." The settlement included a 4.5 per cent increase in provision for education and a 6.9 per cent increase for personal social services. "We were told by councils that these were the

panies over British rights as well as for a feature film in

The book of the video - in

After that come the mer-

chandise agreements; mugs

pens, soft toys, blow up char

acters. Jesus Christ may yet get his cartoon face on sham

poo bottles, sweets, knap-sacks and a million other

signs that councils are seek ing to use that money for Local decisions would be a measure of whether Labour and Liberal Democrat coun-

cils "say one thing and do another", Mr Gummer declared. There was no favouritism for individual councils. Allocations were based on objec-

Total standard spending the sum which the Government thinks councils need in order to provide a standard level of services — for Eng-land for 1996/97 will be £44.93 billion. Whitehall grant will be £35.6 billion.

The shadow environment secretary, Frank Dobson, said: "Council taxpayers will

Mr Dobson added: "The level the Government has set billion lower than councils are actually spending this year, before taking into ac-count inflation.

"Councillors will be services or facing the wrath of the auditor and the courts. Sir Jeremy Beecham, chair-man of the Association of

Metropolitan Authorities, said that the 3.3 per cent increase allowed for by the Gov-ernment would be whittled down by £100 million to cover local government reorganisa-tion and £418 million needed to spend on care in the com

munity programmes.

Concern from the Associa tion of Directors of Social Ser vices also centres on govern ment changes which increase the money paid by local au-thorities on behalf of people living in residential or nurs-

nity care system.

comes clean about life in **Blur**: the fraught relationships, the financial rewards and his plans for a Great Escape from the Beatles of Britpop.

This month in Q, Damon Albarn

PIUSI Crack, kids and firefighting with

Goolio; The showbiz childhood and all-Canadian angst of Alanis **Morissette**; **Neil Diamond** on marriage, moolah and misery, and - cue theramin! - the definitive story of the **Beach** Boys' sun-soaked '60s heyday.

ALSO! We're with the Banned! Q's guide to the records you weren't supposed to hear. And what the heli does The National Lottery

AND!

think it is?

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Reviews section: Lou Reed, Thin Lizzy, Beatles, Ministry, Eazy-E, and **Babylon Zoo**.





US 'spies' dash Bosnian hopes

HE Bosnian peace deal halled as a significant diplomatic success by the United States, is highly umstable and the region can be expected to plunge back into war once American troops leave at the end of the year, according to a leaked top-secret US intelligence report prepared for the White

European troops may stay longer but they too will with-draw "after a decent interval" leaving a highly dangerous situation in which Croatia will dominate Bosnia and is prepared to use force to recover Eastern Slavonia.

The former combatants share a deep mutual mistrust and will continue to seek to achieve their fundamental goals, rather than accommo-dation, even as the Dayton agreement proceeds," report says. "They will see compromise as a zero-sum game and attempt to divide and manipulate the interna-

conservative Washington Times, the leaked report is the draft version of a National Intelligence Estimate, the condensed assessment of US intelligence agencies. It also details the further intelligence studies which are to be compiled by the Delence Intel-

ligence Agency on the pros-pects that a military balance can be achieved in the future. Its publication came as France's president, Jacques Chirac, arrived in Washing-ton on a state visit intended to elebrate the return of the French to the Nato fold and co-operation with the US.

"Minor violations [of the Dayton accords) are expected while the Nato force is in place," the report says hope-fully, but not "major outbreaks of violence that hreaten the renewal of

training the Bosnians is de teers will not go quietly.' scribed as "a delicate The US intelligence orchestration process to en-

tional community in the way simply prepare for another the accords are implemented."

Published yesterday in the conservative Washington Times, the leaked report is report stops short of saying a described as "the big winner" war is inevitable once the US and other Nato Iroops

which is expected, along with will take much of the mean ing from Bosnia-Herzegovi na's vaunted sovereignty. The report says is

tional actors — including Russia, Iran and other pected to undermine the Dayton accords, "although these and other states will back one side or another in disputes over interpreting the

It says: "Iran and other isamic states and movements are clearly anxious to use the footbold they have established in Bosnia and Croatia to advance their regional and global US policy in arming and interests. The Islamic volun-

The US intelligence sum mary, which echoes the pessi

in the war. "Zagreb's military strategy is - and will continue to be

 designed to prevent Mus-lims from linking their Bihad holdings with the central Muslim heartland," it says. "Bosnian Serbs are in no shape to resist a combined Croat-Muslim offensive. but they can resist the Muslims if the latter act alone."

The intelligence assessment is based largely on reports the special Central Intelli gence Agency task forces who region since the ceasefire wa agreed in October.

Bringing together satellite imaging analysts, political and economic experts, and psychological warfare and propaganda teams, the CLA task forces represent the most intense US intelligence effort

since the Gulf war.

What the hell is wrong with Catherine Bennett and her ilk? The Prince of Wales reads, prays, loves the theatre and music, tells jokes, likes a dry martini — and works his butt off to help deprived young people find a future. He detests the destruction of the environment and supports multi-culturalism — issues most Guardian readers would take extremely seriously. Does all that merit the hostility and contempt dished out by chattering hacks like Bennett?

Bel Mooney, Letters page 8

Judge warns of jail term as Customs hunt goes on for mastermind

Woman police officer guilty of £20m gold fraud

convicted of involve nent in a complex

The case may be the last of the importation of gold has Lucie Gilmore, aged 25, of

Bridgnorth, Shropshire, a pat-rol officer based in Telford with West Mercia police, wept at Knightsbridge crown court in London when the jury returned its 10-2 verdict after six hours of deliberation.

Mathew Drape, her policeman boyfriend and the father of her 412 month-old daughter, collapsed.
Ms Gilmore will not be sen-

tenced for at least a month while social inquiry reports are prepared. She was granted hail by Judge Christopher Hordern, QC, who warned her that this was not a guarantee that she would receive a non-custodial sentence. The maxiumum penal-

ty is seven years.
Her father, Michael Gil-more, aged 53, a former offi-cer with the same force, also of Bridgnorth, has pleaded guilty and will be sentenced

minded the operation; his about the Gilmores' smug-girlfriend Rekha Sehdev, both gling trips to Balgium and believed to be on the Indian sub-continent and Harish Ku-

turned into jewellery. A Cus-toms spokesman said yester-

tion was passed to Customs.

In 1992, the law was vestigating the other end of changed so that VAT on gold the fraud, which started in is now only payable when it is | July 1991 when Kanda opened an account with a gold dealer called Stevens NV in Brusday that this has almost sels. A total of three tonnes of eradicated such gold smug- gold bullion worth £20 million gling frauds.

Jim McGregor, deputy chief investigation officer with Customs and Excise, said:
"This was a fraud on a very large scale by determined in-

This was a fraud on a very large scale by determined individuals, two of whom were supposed to be on the side of law and order' - Jim McGregor, Customs deputy chief investigation officer

supposed to be on the side of law and order." He added that it was "very sad" to see a young policewoman's career ruined. He believed her father bore a heavy responsibility for her involvement.

Ms Gilmore was only held

after her former boyfriend, Robert Davis, had been ar-rested for alleged blackmail. Davis, an accountancy stu-dent, had been owed £3,000 by Michael Gilmore and had sent him a note threatening to tell the authorities all about "Lubeing sought in connection with the fraud: jeweller Jeevan Kanda, who is believed by Customs to have master-

by couriers using a fleet of Audi cars in which the gold was concealed in the body work and under the back seat. More than 100 such trips were made. The gold could then be sold in Britain with VAT of 17% per cent added ding to a total profit of

£3.420,000.

A lengthy Customs investicame to the conclusion that volved. At this stage they were contacted by West Mercia police about the "black-mail" note from Davis. The

Gilmores were arrested, Lu-cie at the station where she No further action was taken

against Davis. ing instructor, denied all knowledge of smuggling she had been on trips to Belglum and Luxembourg with her father but said she believed they were in connec-tion with his perfume

"I used to just sit in the passenger seat with my feet on the dashboard, reading a book," she told Customs

Ms Gilmore, who joined the police in 1993, told Customs that ex-boyfriend Davis was a manipulative man who wanted to control the way she looked, telling her that she had to wear no make-up and always had to wear a skirt. She had become a "nervous wreck" as a result of what she called his "emotional black-mail." He had not wanted her to end their relationship while he was doing his ac-

countancy exams.

He had lent her father money and had been angry when he had been unable to repay it. Her father had gone bankrupt after the suicide of David Fox, his partner in an estate agency business, she not give evidence for his daughter, had attempted to

use the fraud as a way of clearing debts accumula through his falled businesses. His late partner, David Fox, had been the link man to





Lucie Gilmore, her father Michael, a former policeman, and Surinder Kumar. Three men are still being sought

'More tagging' plan to ease jails pressure

tronic tagging for minor offenders is being conoffset an expected sharp rise in the prison population. But with a white paper on

the Home Secretary's proposals on sentencing — likely to increase significantly the jail population — due by Easter, the senior judiciary yesterday renewed its attack on Michael Howard's new package. This is expected to include new minimum sentences for persistent burglars and drug dealers and automatic life

terms for repeat rapists.
The Lord Chancellor's department is also looking at ending the use of prison for the 20,000 people, mainly women, jailed each year for failing to pay times, poil tax and television licence bills, with community service orders and tagging being con-sidered as alternatives to jail terms of up to three months. Meanwhile, the Home Office confirmed yesterday that it is studying the results of a Swedish experiment using electronic tagging in-stead of prison sentences for

motoring offenders. Home Office ministers are working on the white paper to look at ways in which house arrest curfew orders backed by electronic monitoring could offset the rise in the prison population due to the tougher sentencing proposals. They are awaiting results of

add between 10,000 and 20,000

Harry Fletcher, assistant general secretary of the National Association of Probation Officers, last night said he regretted that ministers were looking to the unproven lechnology of tagging rather than the probation ser vice and an extension of com-

munity penalties to relieve pressure on fails. "Ministers appear to have concluded that the current and no money does not work They are therefore ironically looking at ways of cutting the short-term prison popul-

Lord Donaldson, the former Master of the Rolls, yesterday renewed his criticism — first aired in the Guardian last month - of Mr Howard's sensaid that tying the hands of judges with minimum sen-tences would lead to injustices: "I think in due course there will be a public outcry

But while Mr Howard agreed he proposals would "limit the discretion of the judiciary" he believed they met the overriding objective of protecting the public from vi-cient criminals. He told the BBC Ratio 4 Today pro-



Woman made 999 call as killer stabbed her

Martin Walnwright

WOMAN made a desperate 999 call as a knifeman stabbed her and her mother to death in a rural market town, police

The small community of Boroughbridge, North York-shire, was in shock at the brutal killing of Evelyn Oxtoby, aged 61, a nurse, and her daughter Lynn, 30, a defence ministry clerk at Catterick

A man aged 48 who knew both women was arrested shortly after the bodies were

victims had jumped 12 feet | the day.

from a bedroom to escape the attack. A post mortem yester-day by a Home Office pathologist showed both had died from stab wounds to the neck. Det Chief Insp Dave Walsh, leading the murder inquiry, said: "The incident was

house, we believe by one of the deceased persons."

Mr Walsh said the man was arrested inside the house. which officers entered soon after arriving in response to the 999 call. A weapon was found and is being examined but police are not issuing

Detectives said that Mrs found at 2am on the pavement outside their house.

Blood on net curtains, an upstairs window sill and in the snow-covered garden suggested that at least one of the visiting had at least one of the visiting had at least one of the data.

They confirmed that the man, who is believed to have been a regular guest at the house, was known to both

Mrs Oxtoby, who worked as a night nursing auxiliary at a hospital in nearby Harrogate, had lived in the cul-de-sac for almost 30 years and was well known in Boroughbridge, a town of about 3,000 beside the river Ure. She was widowed four years ago, and Lynn, her only child, shared the house with her and commuted 20 miles to Catterick.

for most of yesterday, with white sheeting round the spot where the bodies were found. Neighbours said they had not heard any sound of a struggle, and first realised something was wrong when police and ambulance crews filled the





Man paid £5 for 47hr week

Clause in contract deal invoked because of missed night's work because of missed night's work worker with the unit. "But the amount of money surprised us. We suspect this could be common practice."

A WARFHOUSE worker because for a week because littration "come in the property of the common practice."

A WARFHOUSE worker because littration "come in the property of the property of

WAREHOUSE worker said yesterday he was paid just £5 after working a 47-hour. fivenight week loading goods destined for Sainsbury supermarkets.
"I went to my bank three

days before Christmas expecting that about £170 had been paid into my account." said the man who lives in Rochdale, Greater Manchester, and does not wish to be named. "But I found only a fiver had been put in."

The Greater Manchester low pay unit has taken up his case and aims to secure any money owed him and to highlight contract prob-lems facing workers who find jobs through employment agencies.

The man was hired by the Leeds agency ASC Staffing Ltd on behalf of XL Logistics, a transport company used by Sainsbury for two not surprised when this wages be reinstated.

He was trained for a week and then worked two five-night weeks but took a night off to attend his pub soccer team's Christmas party. He claims he had told the agency of the longstanding engagement. When he failed to report

for work. ASC invoked clause eight of the contract: "Should you fail to turn up for any assignment without giving reasonable notice .. your remuneration will be reduced to £1 per day for any work carried out previously and not yet paid, irrespective of hours worked."
"I was fuming. The agen-

cy's manager told me that as they had not been paid they would not pay me." The low pay unit is to contact government inspec-tors charged with monitoring employment agencies. "We have been research-ing agencies and we were

said he could not comment
because litigation "concerning various bits and
pieces" was pending.

• Mentally handicapped
people have had their £5 a
week wages abolished by a
county council in response
to government funding cuts. The 17 workers, whose £10 wages from the Peatlands day centre in Macclesfield, Cheshire, were halved two years ago, were yesterday said to be saddened and confused,

writes Martyn Halsall.
"The main thing that's been taken away from them is not the money ... it's their pride," said John Danton, executive administrator of the Rossendale Trust. It's contradicting all we are working and striv-

ing towards."
He hopes to meet Chesh ire county council social services representatives next week, to ask that the



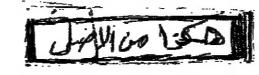




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Minister rejects Marchioness plea

THE Government last night rejected one of the key recommendations of the inquest jury on the 51 Marchioness disaster victims that all crew on passenger launches should be required to wear inflatable lifejackets. The Department of Transport said it would not be practical and could be interpreted by passengers "as a lack of crew confidence in the safety of the ship".

It might also give the impression that the crew gave "higher priority to their own cafety" than to that of their passengers.

nt might also give the impression that the crew gave "higher priority to their own safety" than to that of their passengers. The statement came with a short response by the shipping minister. Lord Goschen, that the Government agreed with 10 of the jury's 12 recommendations. In April last year the jury returned verdicts of unlawful killing. The Government also rejected the recommendation that all medical examinations for the same and mesters should be carried out by an independent. crew and masters should be carried out by an independent doctor. - Keith Harper

Camden gets tough on staff

NEARLY half the staff working for the London borough of Camden — including some who pledged to stay at their jobs after a 210 million National Lottery win last week — face dismissal and re-employment on poorer terms. Strikes and legal challenges are being prepared after the controlling Labour group decided to

force nearly 2,100 employees to accept new terms.

Current arrangements, which include union vetos over changes to disciplinary procedures and special leave, were said vesterday to "make no sense". "Dependency leave" for staff to nurse sick relatives is among conditions most at risk. The changes are expected to be formally agreed by the corporate services committee today. — James Meikle

Judge's promise to woman

A JUDGE at Durham crown court ordered a mother, aged 33, to disclose her home phone number so that the Department of Social Security can trace her address, despite her fears that her ex-

husband may attack her.

The woman has refused to give his lawyers her address even. though he has won a court order allowing him contact with their sons aged nine and seven. Judge William Crawford said the children's whereabouts would not be revealed to their father.

Degrees of change

WOMEN graduating from British universities outnumbered men for the first time last year after 10 years of rapid growth in the number of students gaining first degrees. According to the Higher Education Statistics Agency, 104,900 women got first degrees in the UK in 1994/5 compared with 102,500 men.

Just over a third of the students graduating last year had been on part-time courses and 12 per cent were from overseas. Of those receiving first degrees, 7 per cent got first class honours and 41 per cent got an upper second. — John Curvel

Receiver called in at charity

A CHARITY which claims to raise money for aid projects in Africa has been taken into receivership following an investigation by the Charity Commission into alleged misappropriation of funds. Humana, set up in Britain in 1986, collects and sells second-hand clothes, ostensibly to support development in Africa.

The decision to place the charity into receivership follows several years of concern about the uses to which Humana was putting its charitable funds. — Edward Pilkington

ITN strike called off

A STRIKE which threstened to disrupt ITN's main news programmes loday was called off-after an agreement was hammered had voted to hold a two-bour strike in protest at plans to end.

ollective pay bargaining. The two sides reached an agreement which ends collective bargaining, but leaves the unions a role in helping to set pay bands and minimum salaries. — Andrew Culf

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FIRST OPEN



Ideal home . . . the listed pigsty which English Heritage believes could become a 'des res' — at a price

and to deliver a crisp and prompt approach, she said.

Witnesses, who cannot be compelled to attend, will have

the right to legal representa

tion, but will not be permitted

to conduct cross-examination.

Mr Snowden has indicated

he will give evidence, and Ms

Rafferty said she was keen to

talk to the Panorama journal-

ists and production team in-

volved in setting up the inter-

Branson snub may hinder lottery probe

Andrew Culf

LHE barrister investigating bribery allegations surrounding the National Lottery conceded yesterday her inquiry would be hampered by Richard Branson's decision to boycott

the proceedings, Anne Rafferty QC, chairman of the Criminal Bar Association, was speaking as she formally opened the in-quiry into an allegation made by the Virgin Group chair-man on BBC1's Panorama in December that he had been of-fered a bribe to withdraw his

Mr Branson complained the inquiry was not genuinely in-dependent, had a limited remit and would be held in He is unhappy because the

inquiry was set up by Peter Davis, the director general of the Office of the National Lot-tery, who could be a witness. Virgin believes the allegation will be properly investi-gated in a High Court libel

action, likely to be heard before the summer. Snowden, chairman of in a court of law before a GTECH part of the Camelot consortium which runs the Ms Rafferty, who adjourned lottery, for accusing him of lying over the bribery allega-tion. Mr Snowden subse-

Virgin argued that evidence would be given on oath in the High Court and witnesses would be compelled to

A Virgin spokesman said:
"Richard will be happy to cooperate with any public inquiry, but he is not prepared
to be involved with an inquiry that does not deal with ore the summer.

Mr Branson sued Guy feetly happy to give evidence

the inquiry until February 28, said: "The inquiry will be im-peded if Mr Branson, having

quently issued a writ against raised this hare, does not Mr Branson's meeting with Mr Branson for his original come to the inquiry."

She said she hoped Mr 1993. Any subsequent action Branson would give evidence. "It is a matter for him as to would be determined by Mr Davis. The inquiry will be con-ducted in private to avoid the process becoming unwieldy soothed when he hears how I

She denied the investiga-tion would be irrelevant without his participation and strongly defended her own in-dependence. "If anyone thinks my impartiality is compromised by who chooses me and who pays me, they underestimate me and they have an interesting definition

run the inquiry.

of integrity." Under its terms of reference it is confined to seeking to es-

sinks £40,000 in pigsty Maev Kennedy Heritage Correspo

BRITAIN 5

Council

KENT council has reluctantly voted to restoring a listed tin shack which an official said was "a pigsty, by name and by

English Heritage and Gillingham borough council are locked in dispute over the Grade II listed Black House, which has been a house, a pigsty and a chicken coop, at a time when the entire listings

system is under review. English Heritage opposed a council proposal to move the house, saying this would virtually make it a new building.

The council has just voted "very, very reluc-tantly" to spend £40,000 on renovation, under threat of English Heritage carrying out the work itself and landing the council with a

far higher bill.
The Grade II listing, the lowest category, means grants are at the discretion

of English Heritage.
"The counciliors regard this as a total waste of money, and voted feeling that a gun had been put to their heads," said council spokesman Alan Watkins. Richard Morris, the English Heritage historic buildings inspector who recommended the listing, said English Heritage was pursuing talks with the council to find a suitable future use for the building. The shack is the tottering survivor of a hamlet built around 1625, backing onto

the Rainbam marshes. It only stands because props were put in last year to shore up rotting timbers. after the council served a dangerous buildings notice

English Heritage suggested restoring it as a residence, but the council be-lieves this would cost at least £150,000, and be impossible to sell.

"We regard this as important building with a future," a spokeswoman for English Heritage said. "We regard this as a lost cause," said Mr Watkins. The Department of National Heritage nounced the Grade II list-ing of four more post-war buildings yesterday. They are: Richmond Swimming Baths, Surrey, completed in 1966; St Mary's School, Wallasey, Merseyside, 1962; former chapel at Hop-wood Hall College, Middleton, Greater Manchester. 1965; Gillett House, Chichester Theological College, West Sussex, 1965.

Carling case mars press watchdog delight

Andrew Culf

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ORD Wakeham, chair-man of the Press Com-plaints Commission, yesterday hailed a momentous body had proved its independence and ability to bite.
But publication of the com-

mission's annual report coin-

an Alliance & Leicester

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invaded her privacy.

In a letter to Virginia Bottomley, the National Heritage Secretary, Mrs Carling's solicitors said the adjudication proved that self-regulation

But the commission agreed

over its decision to reject with the tabloid that Mrs Car- public domain it was not un- not one inch of room for com-complaints from Julia Car- ling had forfeited her right to reasonable for newspapers to placency. We are well aware ling, estranged wife of the privacy because she had pre-England rugby union captain viously put her private life into the public domain viously put her private life into the public domain through interviews and articles designed to promote her career as a television means that the number of complaints in 1995, a rise described as a welcome sign of the said the commission.

That memories are short and that just a few ill-judged that just a few ill-jud

> The adjudication was bound to encourage further media excess in relation to socalled public figures, her so-licitors claimed. It also left Mrs Carling "beyond the pro-tection of the PCC and with-

> remedy".
>
> Lord Wakeham, speaking on Radio 4's The World at One, said if people encour-

comment upon them.

growing public awareness of commission's ability to dem-

onstrate its independence as the supervisor of self-regulation had convinced the Gov-ernment there was no need for a statutory crackdown on

But he warned: "We do not take this transformation in the fortunes of press self-reguthat memories are short and

was offering an increasingly effective service to the public. "I am convinced self-regulation is delivering the goods. I want in 1996 to build on this

Of the 2,508 complaints received, 70 per cent related to accuracy and the majority were resolved directly by edi tors to the satisfaction of complainants. Twelve per cent of cases related to alleged intruaged details to come into the lation for granted. There is sion into privacy.

Murdered backpacker buried

Thai judges sentence **Buddhist monk** to firing squad

Lawrence Donegan

OHANNE Masheder, the English backpacker murdered while holidaying in Thailand, was buried yesterday, hours after a Bud-dhist monk was sentenced to death for killing her.

Mourners packed St Mi-chael's Church in the Cheshire village of Wincle, where they heard the Reverend David Moir, her parish priest, say the trainee solicitor's death had devastated the

"It wasn't just that it was someone from our village, but that it was a young member of a family this village have taken to their hearts and for whom that feeling is reciprocated. Jo had been so universally loved and so full of life, a young woman of whom everyone was justly proud," he said.

Mr Moir said Ms Masheder's family must not allow her murder to trigger a life of bitterness.

He added: "Grief is a debili-tating thing and I am sure from what I know of Johanne that she wouldn't want us to hold on too much to this feeling which is anyway so



appeared in December, days before she was due to return home to start work as a solici-tor after a three-month trip around the world.

Her parents, Stuart and Jackie Masheder, travelled to Thailand in an effort to find their daughter. Her body was discovered in a cave near a Buddhist temple at Kanchan-aburi in western Thailand on January 14 — three weeks after she was due home.

Yodchart Suephoo, a 21year-old Buddhist monk, conessed he had killed the Englishwoman after robbing her of money to buy himself

drugs.
Yodchart, who had a previous conviction for rape, told a court hearing in Kanchanaburi yesterday he had not meant to kill Ms Masheder nslaving."

but could not control himself
Ms Masheder, aged 23, disbecause of his drug addiction. but could not control himself



Johanne Masheder, killed by Yodchart Suephoo (right) who wanted money to buy drugs

In a statement read by one of the two presiding judges, the court said the monk's behaviour was "not The court refused Yodcorrectable".

"He has damaged the repu-tation of our religious institution and the reputation of the country since the victim was

chart's request that he be immediately executed at the scene of his crime. Under Thai law all death sentences must be reviewed by a second

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A group of influential scientists want to pinpoint

genes that influence intelligence as measured by IQ scores, and they plan to do the work while telling as few people about it as possible.

OnLine page 2

World news in brief

Polish communists nominate new PM

POLAND'S reformed communists held on to power yesterday after negotiations with their junior coalition partner, the Peasant Party, brought the nomination of a new head of government, diffusing the crisis caused by the resignation of prime

minister Jozef Oleksy amid allegations he spied for Russia. The new candidate is Mr Oleksy's party colleague, the deputy speaker of parliament, Wlodzimierz Cimoszewicz, A respected technocrat, Mr Cimoszewicz, aged 45, supports continuing

market reforms and European integration.

President Aleksander Kwasniewski was expected to accept the nomination today before leaving for the World Economic Summit in Davos. He had urged a speedy resolution to the crisis while trying to allay Western fears that the spy scandal would affect Polish credibility for Nato membership.

The composition of the new cabinet is not yet known, but few observers expect big policy or personnel changes. Mr Oleksy, who denies any wrongdoing, was elected party leader the day after he was forced to resign. — Matthew Brezinski, Warsaw.

Saint protects missiles

SAINT BARBARA, a fourth-century martyr traditionally prayed to in the West by those in danger of sudden death, has been made the patron saint of Russia's intercontinental nuclear missile force. The command centre from which the Strategic Rocket Forces have the power to take the world apart in considerably less time than it took the God of Genesis to put it together was visited on Tuesday by the head of the Russian Orthodox Church, Patriarch Alexei II, who presented generals with an icon of the saint. The patriarch said: "Her [Saint Barbara's] presence before God will give all you, dear brothers and sisters, peace, prosperity, health, strength and courage in carrying out military service for the glory of our fatherland."

the glory of our fatherland."

The patriarch said he had chosen St Barbara because her feast day, 17 December, was on the same date as Russia's officially-appointed Rocket Forces Day. Western hagiographers, however, consider the martyr to be the patron saint of people with highly dangerous jobs. including artillerymen.

The Oxford Dictionary of Saints records that her father was said to have been killed by lightning, "This was the basis of her patronage of those in danger of sudden death, first by lightning, and then by subsiding mines, or cannonballs, Hence her patronage of miners and gunners." — James Meek, Mascow.

China serenades Hong Kong

THE People's Liberation Army of China has just released 15

bracing songs to serenade Hong Kong into submission when Britain hands over the colony next year.

Starring members of China's post-1997 military garrison, the new recording includes I Love You Hong Kong, To the Fragrant River as a Soldier, On the Training Ground, and Put Your Heart at Ease Mother Put Your Heart at Ease Motherland.

A cover photograph shows a soldier, sailor and airman, two of them holding Chinese Kalashnikovs, beneath a billowing red flag against the skyscrapers of Hong Kong's central business district. The PLA's début on Hong Kong's music scene is part of a charm offensive by the military. But the songs are in mandarin, a dialect understood by few in Hong Kong. — Andrew Higgins, Hong Kong.

Rights groups protest

INTERNATIONAL human rights groups have protested at the appointment of the Honduran military commander in chief, General Luis Alonso Discua, to his country's delegation on the United Nations Security Council.

Gen Discua was the first commander of the CIA-trained Battalion 316 which has been identified by the government's commissioner for human rights as the unit involved in the torture, kidnapping and murder of dozens of leftwing opponents during the 1980s. His appointment as one of two deputies to the Honduran permanent representative was made personally by the president. Carlos Roberto Reina, after the two clashed last December over

attempts to bring 10 military officers to court.

The World Organisation Against Torture in Geneva yesterday called for Gen Discua to be dismissed. Hooduras's seat on the Security Council expires at the end of the year. — David Pallister.

Serbs fear their relatives' graves in Sarajevo may be desecrated, reports Julian Borger in Viakovo

Dead raised to rest in peace

life would turn out like this. When he buried his mother and son in Vlakovo cemetery, he did not think he would be back on his hands and knees scraping the dirt off their coffins and sweat-

ing as he raised them from their graves. With the help of neighbours and his surviving son, Momcilo, Mr Vukovic worked slowly and methodically from dawn yesterday, straightening his back only to share a ceremonial glass of plum

brandy. Clearly a man in rigid control of his emotions, he worked quietly, confining himself to murmured remarks about the soil, the ciness of the wind, and the fear Muslim reprisals

AZAR VUKOVIC surprising weight of the never imagined his coffins.

His mother, Stmina, was killed in 1992 when a mortar hit the family bome. Two years later Mr Vukovic buried his son, Obren. in a nearby plot. Obren was aged 29, but he died of a weak heart, driven beyond its limits by the war.

About 40 Serb families

have come to Vlakovo cemetery to dig up the remains of relatives. They will take them with them on a trek in search of new homes when Serb districts of Sarajevo are transferred to government control on Saturday. Efforts by international

to stay have been poorly-funded, and have so far proved puny gainst a wave of panic. Sarajevo Serbs

army in Bosnia's war has left

"The remaining foreign forces left Koprivna (in north-west Bosnia) at 7.30 hours yesterday morning and were escorted to the Croatian bor-der by civil police," Lieuten-

Momeilo Vukovic was sure that many Serb graves would be desecrated by vengeful Muslims. The old

HE last group of Islamic | ant-Colonel Mark Rayner told | forces in Bosnia as a legiti-

mojahedin who fought on a briefing.
the side of the mainly-Muslim The presence of the volun-

eers, Muslims from different Islamic countries, alarmed the country, a Nato spokes-man said yesterday. Dayton peace agreement.

tombs of soldiers would be shrines lie in ruins.

Washington apparently reports indicated "increased feared that the mojahedin activity" from the mojahedin in Bosnia.—Reuter.

against the dead and the | defaced. Virtually all Oryards in government-held areas have been left untouched during the war, and when we are on the but Bosnian Serbs have other side of the line, we been told by their leaders, graves would be left in by newspapers and televi-peace, he said, but the sion, that their people's

mate alternative target once the war against the Serbs had

The Pentagon put its 18,000 the Pentagon and a clause on troops deployed with the the removal of all "foreign Nato-led Implementation forces" was included in the Force (I-FOR) on alert last week saying its intelligence

> Lazar Vakovic is more matter of fact than his son: "It's just that we used to go to the graves every Sunday, and that would be very painful."

An aluminium sarcepha-

Last of Islamic mojahedin troops bow out | gns lay beside each grave. The family had bought them from a local frommon-ger, fearing that the old wooden coffins would be in

no shape to transport. They were proven right. Four feet down, their spades hit the wooden ild of Simina's casket. Lazar scraped the soil away and it . was clear that it had collapsed under the weight of earth. They carefully slipped cords underneath and hauled it up to the harsh winter sunlight.

One of Vlakovo's grave diggers wandered over to tell them that the coffin was so heavy because of water filtered out of the saturated clay. They would have to drain it before the wooden coffin was placed the -new



Troubled waters . . . A team of Turkish commandos and a Turkish journalist return to Turkey yesterday after landing on the disputed island of Imla in a midnight operation

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RAC

Aegean retreat irks Greek MPs have only one thing left to do | each other and we have too | where the Americans are hop-

Helena Smith in Athens

REECE'S Socialist gov ernment came under bitter attack yesterday for heeding President Clinmilitary confrontation with Turkey over a disputed rocky outcrop in the Aegean. The government, under the

new prime minister, Costas Simitis, faced calls to resign and accusations of trea when parliament met to discuss what many saw as a humiliation in the face of Turk-

"The removal of Greek troops from the island and the lowering of the Greek flag constitute an act of treason." Militadis Evert, leader of the and Turkey "have too much countries appears to have pute has reinforced the Greek conservative New Democracy in common and too much to scuppered hopes of a rapperception of Turkey's desired party, told parliament. "You gain in getting along with prochement on Cyprus, to expand across the Aegean.

Greek and Turkish force around the island of Imia and a de-escalation of the crisis," Mr Simitis told parliament to angry shouts of "traitors" and "sell-out" from opposi-

Members of New Democ racy and of another nationalist party walked out in protest during a debate before a confidence vote which the Social-ists are expected to win.

returned to the Aegean after Mr Clinton insisted that it was unacceptable for two
Nato allies to go to war over
an island which is only used
to graze goats. He said Greece
and Turkey "have too much
in common and too much to

on gradual withdrawal of military units which started at six this morning and is under way. The biggest units have already disengaged," said Theodoros Pangalos, the for-

eign minister.
Turkey responded by saying it was pleased with the reports that Greece was withdrawing and confirmed it would also pull back. "We only wanted one thing, that the Greek soldiers, ships and flag would be withdrawn," said Deniz Baykal, the Turk-

ish foreign minister. The rapid deterioration in relations between the two countries appears to have scuppered hopes of a rap-

resign."

many other important issues ing for a big effort towards a "The Greek government in that area" for the dispute settlement this year. The dispute over Imia

> ish journalists went to the island, which Turkey calls Kardak, and replaced a Greek flag with a Turkish one. Greece says the island was

> along with the main islands of the Dodecanese off the Turkish coast, but Ankara dis-

> A Greek navy helicopter crashed during the mutual withdrawal yesterday. The Greek defence ministry said three crew were missing As Greek gunboats, sub-marines and elite commados retreated, few believed it was the end of the spat. The dis-pute has reinforced the Greek

perception of Turkey's desire

Czech party slows race to Nato

Jonathan Steele

THE first hint of a pause in central Europe's rush to join Nato has emerged in Prague, with the Social Democratic Party's promise of a referendum before any decision is taken.

To the displeasure of United States diplomats, the party has also said that if the Czech Republic joins Nato it should not permit foreign troops or nuclear weapons to sed on its territory.

The Social Democrats are running second to the ruling Civic Democratic Party in opinion polls before parliamentary elections in May. Like the rightwing governcate unqualified entry to recent party congress forced

The retreat from Nato-fanaticism mirrors poll find-ings in Hungary and Poland, where broad public support for Nato membership has de-

clined somewhat. In Hungary, a poll late last year found support dropping from 46 to 38 per cent and opposition rising from 11 to 30 per cent after Nato pub-lished its long-awaited condi-tions for enlargement. Although the alliance set no a priori requirement for new members to accept nuclear weapons and foreign troops, it did not offer them a veto.

In Poland, a poll showed 59 per cent against foreign troops and 82 per cent against nuclear weapons in Poland after entry to Nato. The new hesitancy over the | nuclear weapons.

the leadership to accept that terms of Nato membership any decision to join must be appears to be a revival of the appears to be a revival of the mood which swept through central Europe a decade ago during the flerce debate about stationing Soviet SS-20 and American Pershing and Tomahawk missiles on each side of the cold-war divide. In Germany and central Europe many felt they would be the first victims of an exchange of medium-range nuclear mis-siles by the two superpowers.

Central Europeans are real-ising that Nato membership carries risks as well as gains. They also see that longer-standing alliance signatories have always had à la carte membership. The Czech Social Democrats' new policy says the country should follow the Danish or Norwegian models of Nato membership, which ban foreign bases and

diplomats are particularly concerned by a possible ban on foreign troops and bases in central Europe. Washington views the troopfree zone in Denmark and Norway as less important because both are

In advance of possible Hungarian membership of Nato, the US has taken over a large former Warsaw Pact base at Kaposvar in the Danube plain. The Pentagon is using t as a staging area for troops implementing the Bosnian peace accords, but analysts presume the US wants to turn t into a permanent facility for American use. Vaclav Klaus, the Czech prime minister, wants no lim-

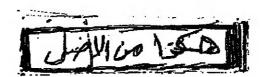
its on Nato. He said Czechs should not behave "like a pas-senger who takes the tram but does not buy a ticket".

. . .



Without the idea of art': that's a chilling notion, but it may be that finally after 2,500 years, literature in the widest possible sense is surrendering to technology. After all, in just 50 years the study of Latin and Greek has been reduced to a tiny specialist area and it looks as if departments of English will follow.

Porter G2 cover story



There is little for Yeltsin to celebrate, with poor poll ratings and an exodus of the country's brightest

Birthday blues for Boris as his popularity sinks

David Hearst in Mescow

RUSSIAN president's 65th birthday is usually quite an event. In the old days he could reasonably expect to award himself a golden star of Hero of Socialist Labour, which would be presented at a Kremlin ceremony broad-cast on state television.

cast on state television.

Gifts would pour into the Kremlin; bright carpets and jars bearing the great leader's face from the Asian republics; model tractors, aircraft, tanks and missiles from workers' collectives. The celebrations would culminate in an assembly at the Bolshoi Theatre in the evening. Boris Yeltsin, who turns 65 today, will be spared all this.

"Going by past years, we do not expect any public engage-

"Going by past years, we do not expect any public engage-ments," an official in his ac-

"The president will have a be paid unless they signed his regular working day and he nomination. He needs I mil-will celebrate his birthday lion signatures. with his work colleagues and family." It will have to be a quiet family affair if the tele-grams the president is receiv-

But this is mild in comparison with what many Russians think of their president.

Activists from the All Rusing are anything to go by.

One such telegram read:
"The people of the town of Salsk, of the Rostov region, are indignant about the cruddisillusioned. Angelina Shortain of Law and said: "Thanks to the activities." disillusioned. Angelina Shor said: "Thanks to the activities of the president's circle, we found ourselves in such dirt ... I am not only not going to agitate for Yeltsin, I won't

vote for him anymore."
Reactions to Mr Yeltsin
were worse when they came
from people who had been
close to the president. Gavrill Popov, Moscow's former mayor, who helped him to power, said: "Yeltsin

can't break with two funda-mental qualities of his per-sonality — his populism and bossiness."

Pavel Voshchanov, his former press officer, said: "Not only your pocket, but your reason prompts you to say, For God Sake he must go." According to opinion polls, Mr Yeltsin has sunk to 10th position, with only 5 per cent of Russians expressing confi-dence in his candidacy. It is hard to find supporters.

One, an academic, said: "I will vote for him, as many of the Italian Christian Demo-crats voted in the 1970s -

holding their noses."
Sergei Filatov, a former supporter, Said: "The last supporter, said: "The last steps of the president have upset me. Everything which happens near the president provokes concern, whether you talk about the state of his health, his security service or about the existence of a shadow centre of power.

sacked him as head of his ad-

wolves invade Estonia

ion Honley in Tallinn

TPECT the worst from the east, the Estonians say; if it's not Tsar Peter's cavalry it will be the Red Army. This winter, it is

Two unusually cold months have frozen Lake Peipsi, which forms much of Estonia's eastern border with Russia. This has allowed hungry grey wolves to cross into the Baltic state's deep forests, swell-ing the native population. Hunters estimate up to 800 wolves may be at large

in Estonia, a country the size of the Netherlands, which might naturally sup-port a wolf population a tenth of this size.

"They are a problem this year," said Jaak Tambets, the environment ministry's

senior conservation officer.
"They take wild boar, elk and roe deer, and some-times cattle and pets. We don't know exactly how many there are, but it's a

There have been no recorded attacks on humans, though a wolf was recently sighted six miles from the capital, Tailinn. The Estonian government

has allocated funds to equip wolf hunters with walkie-talkies. Extra hunting li-

cences have been granted. Wolf hunters enter snowcovered forest clearings carrying guns and reels of twine knotted with scraps of red bunting. Winding the twine through the trees, they drive the wolves into the trap where they stop short, apparently scared by the fluttering cloth.

Last winter some 200 were shot this way; the figure could be higher this year, Mr Tambets said. Mass deportations and

collectivisation during 50 years of Soviet occupation turned parts of Estonia into a wolf's paradise, by restor-ing the animal's natural habitat. A series of mild winters — had for hunting — helped to boost numbers.

In Estonian folklore, the wolf was both admired and feared. One of the few creatures strong enough to overpower the devil it was too terrifying to be called

Russia's youth vote with their feet

Disillusioned rich students are leaving in droves to study and work abroad, writes Carol Williams in Moscow

£ £ HATE my country". said Maria Mikhai-lova as the Delta Air Lines flight from New York taxied toward the gate at Mos-cow's Sheremetyevo airport. family again, but I just cannot live here anymore," the economics student, aged 21, said, gazing with disgust at the dimly litterminal.

She was back for a visit where they might be better after her first three months at rewarded. Harvard - an educational op-

thousands of other youths from the urban elite who are studying abroad opt to stay there, the exodus will take a heavy toll on Russia's hopes for a democratic future.

Like many members of the emerging privileged class who have come of age at a

the abundance abroad and has decided that a life of sacrifice is not for her. "I want to live in America or England or said. "I don't believe anything good will ever be created in

The children of those prospering from Russia's new-found capitalism are leaving in droves to study abroad and to start careers in countries

The threat of being drafted portunity unthinkable for for duty in Chechenia, the Russians not that long ago, rise in crime and violence in and one that had cost her the ciries, the corruption of hard-working parents dearly. their once-respected educa-But if Ms Mikhailova and tional institutions are reasons why young people want to give up and get out. More than 2,000 visas are

issued for Russian students by the United States consulate each year, and thousands of students are thought to be en-rolled in private European in-stitutions. The only deterrents for young Russians who de-

"Many new businessmen here are in a position to send their children abroad for edu-cation," said Alexander Shev-chenko, head of the Moscow office of the international stu-

The only patriotic feelings I have are for my parents and for my friends'

dent exchange programme Youth for Understanding. A common feeling amon young people is a weakening desire to return to build a bet-

ter Russia. "I don't feel any obligation to this country," said Masha Zarakhovich, aged 20, who returned for the winter holidays. She is on a scholarship at Berry College in Mount Berry, Georgia. borders. Ms Mikhailova has cide to stay abroad are the had the chance to compare legal and economic conditions the hardships at home with in their country of choics.

The only patriotic feelings I come a democratic country, have are for my parents, for the flat where I grew up, for this."—Los Angeles Times.

Nearly every successful business person in Moscow argues that foreign study is the best investment parents can make for their children. Many wealthy parents also see it as a way of protecting their children against the rise in crime.

"Many new businessmen for the government."

Dmitri Bogatyrev, who is studying civil engineering at Moscow State University, said the quality of higher education has suffered tremendously in recent years because the economic crime. fostered bribery and cheating. "At MSU, a diploma costs

At lesser schools, you can buy one for £5,000," he said. Mr Bogatyrev, who went to school in New York while his dent, was working there, also blamed the sorry state of Russian higher education on the lack of financial support.

"How can the government keep the best professors when they pay £30 or £35 a month?" he said. Russian education officials acknowledge the conse-quences of a youthful brain drain. Mikhail Myasnikov, chief of the foreign relations mittee for higher education said: "It always hurts to lose something that belongs to

"But once we decided to be



Lost for words... President Boris Yeltsin, who is expected to celebrate his 65th birthday quietly today, has altenated many of his former supporters who helped him to power

Man, or Scratch Eye.

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What wage for an MP?

The answer is to pay more but to fewer of them

THE DAMAGE has been done and it | tainly ironic that so many MPs who MPs' pay which attracted such extensive support at Westminster on Tuesday night does not call for a doubling of Day Motion 351 is more modest and to current concerns about standards of referred to the Nolan Committee. Nothing there about specific salary levels. were anxious to keep the questions of ing there about specific salary levels. Nothing about comparabilities either. And no mention of the "doubling" which scooped the headlines yesterday. Contrary to the hype, the motion is straightforward and deserves support.

Yet it was almost inevitable that the MPs' action was misunderstood. MPs are mistrusted, yet they seem collectively slow to recognise the problem and inept in trying to remedy it. They rightly believe that their £34,000 salary is too low. Yet they have only themselves to blame for the fact that nothing sensible and structured has been done about it. That failure has encouraged many more MPs to do what many also did already, to supplement their income from outside earnings. That is why the growth of the public relations and lobbying industries have found so many grateful takers on the Westminster backbenches. That in turn is why the Nolan committee was set up in the first place. Many Conservative MPs disapproved of it at the time, and were appalled by the far-reaching character of its report last May. The public, on the other hand, was not. They start from the opposite belief to that of the MPs. They largely assume that MPs and ministers are well catered for and quite possibly on the take. However indignant this may make MPs, it is sufficient of a reality to ensure that they are unable to do anything about their own

may be too late to put the record denounced its report last year have now straight. Nevertheless the motion on come round to the view that the Nolan committee is a necessary body after all.

There is, of course, an important procedural problem. The Nolan combackbenchers' salaries. In fact Early mittee's terms of reference are confined sensible. It says that the question of conduct in public life. The pay of MPs MPs' and ministers' pay should be and ministers did not originally form short-term sleaze and long-term pay quite separate. Nolan was seen as a surgical operation, putting the body politic back together after a nasty accident. That is no longer sustainable, and Nolan is increasingly coming to be seen as a general practitioner rather than a surgeon, providing a continuing course of preventive treatment for an interlinked network of cash-and-politics problems, not just one-off cures. This is the right approach, and pay should be referred to Nolan. Yet by the same argument it must also be right for the committee to look at other questions funked before, especially the whole system of political party funding.

We have long argued that MPs and ministers are underpaid. We agree that these matters should go to Nolan, so that they can be put on a long-term basis. But it is naive and even dangerous for MPs to believe that even that is enough. Referring pay to Nolan will not get our politicians off the hook of public dissatisfaction. At the very least, a hike in MPs' salaries ought to be considered alongside a review of the case for reducing the membership of the House of Commons to 500. With a membership of 651, shortly to rise to 659, our parliament is one of the largest in the world. Devolution would expose this fact still further. So would reform of the upper House. MPs are paying a price for the grievances. Not for the first time, there discredit of politics — but they will fore, parliament needs Nolan. It is cer- have to pay a price for reform of it too.

The maiming of Sri Lanka

Atrocities like this brutalise society but solve nothing

Lankan capital, Colombo, where 55 yesterday by suspected Tamil suicide bombers, is a terrible reminder of the human cost of civil war in a beautiful, tear-shaped island — and of the limits of force in solving chronic ethnic conflicts. Every prospect does not please: 13 years and perhaps 50,000 lives further on, the violence shows no sign of abating. Tamils, making up nearly 18 per cent of the 18 million strong population, want more say in running their own lives with demands ranging from greater powers for provincial councils to full independence in the north and east of the country.

They have always argued that Colombo's language, education and employment policies have been shaped in ways that favour the majority Sinhalese, though nowadays moderate Tamils see signs that their complaints are beginning to be heeded. This is a war with roots deep in the past, but the special tragedy of yesterday's dreadful explosion, attributed to the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, is that it comes at a time when prospects for a political settlement - the only sort possible - had seemed brighter than before.

President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga was widely praised when she took the initiative a year ago, boldly offering a cessation of hostilities with the LTTE, only to face renewed attacks families in downtown Colombo will not on military and civilian targets. Her

CARNAGE in the streets of the Sri | package of devolution proposals, offering substantial autonomy on eight people were killed and 1,400 injured regional councils, was rejected both by the Tigers and hardline Sinhalese nationalists. Recently presented to parlia-ment in clear legal form, the proposals are on hold but could represent a major constitutional accomodation for legitimate Tamil concerns - yet without the approval of the Tigers they cannot be implemented.

The government too has followed a dual strategy: Mrs Kumaratunga came under pressure from her own generals and last October authorised a new offensive that resulted in the capture of the Tiger-controlled Jaffna peninsula. But without that key citadel to defend they then became freer to concentrate on what made them notorious terrorism.

The Tigers have always had mithlessness on their side: their leader, the messianic Velupillai Prabhakaran, sent "hit squads" to kill the Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi as well as the Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa and the opposition presidential candidate Gamini Dissanayake. And as their extremism sets the tone, other Tamils have either fallen silent or become collaborators. This war, with its inevitable atrocities and human rights abuses by both sides, has brutalised Sri Lankan society and maimed the economy. Dazed and traumatised office workers, dismembered bodies and vengeful hasten its end.

Dullness be my friend

How to avoid becoming inadvertently interesting

THAT was the dullest January ever, the | homes found themselves watching Met Office reports. But record duliness, like military intelligence, is a bit of a contradiction in terms. Even in the occupationally downbeat Met Office there was no disguising the excitement last night as they totted up the hours to see if January 1996 had finally ousted January 1917 as the dullest of all. If you are a weather forecaster, then the

duller the better. Those of us who are mindful of Charles Lamb's dictum that only a melancholy can be dull in Fleet Street enjoyed a vintage January. A month that included Emma's defection and Harriet's choice can hardly be called dull. Daphne Banks came back from the grave and so in a different sense did Lady Thatcher, though François Mitterrand didn't. We had Fergie's freebies, Tony's stakeholding and we finished on instantly interesting. Dullness gives us a high with Phil and the snooper. the ultimate contradiction: the duller it

some of the least dull television in months - the Gulf War. Covent Garden and Our Friends in the North.

The trouble with being really dull is that an excess of it will change you into your opposite. Shakespeare got it right with honest Constable Dull, a minor character in Love's Labour's Lost who says little but always gets a laugh. Geoffrey Howe tried to build a political career on duliness, only to be transformed when he became inadvertently interesting. The challenge with all dullness is to be quite dull, fairly dull, or comparatively dull. If you become extraordinarily dull, astonishingly dull or simply the dullest then you become anything but dull. The Shetland Isles, dubbed the dullest place in Britain by the Met Office yesterday, is thereby People who were too dull to leave their | gets, the less dull it becomes.



Letters to the Editor

Few takers for a House on the market

inflation (All-party campaign for hig rise in MPs' pay, Janu-ary 31). Our wages are per-fectly adequate. We're not supposed to be here for com-mercial gain but to serve the supposed to be nere for com-mercial gain but to serve the public. The norms of the mar-ketplace shouldn't apply. It would be useful, however,

to improve resources and facilities to do the job; but this doesn't mean putting more money in MPs' pockets. Many people would be rightly abocked if those MPs who have forced down wages and massively increased unemployover the last 17 years were to stick their noses in the trough for higher wages. That would be hypocrisy. Harry Barnes MP. London SWIA DAA

WILL be giving whole-hearted support to MPs who demand independent pay reviews and a massive catch-up. It would be churlish not to when I demand only that for academic and related staff. Of course, there are differences between the occupations: MPs are cutting their hours, don't lengthening their holidays, 18 Finlarig Street, and are resisting Lord Easterhouse, Nolan's call to be explicit Glasgow G34 0AD.

demic administrators, meanwhile, have merely doubled student numbers in six years, increased vital research massively, brought in £1.2 billion per annum in overseas earpings for universities, and now work 55 hours a week. No wonder Screaming Lord Sutch seeks parliamentary

General Secretary, Association of University Teachers. 9 Pembridge Road, London W11 3JY.

who reject moves to inwho reject moves to indemics, librarians, computer
staff, researchers and acastaff, researchers and acaan extra MP, but I have met
be cut if they refused to

Peter Mendenhall.

AST week, a neighbour, adependent upon income support, had to keep her son from school as she could not afford new shoes. The Government says public expenditure on the poor must be cut. Our voluntary project, serving 300 children a week, gets no help from the local authority because it is short of resources.

MPs, already well-paid and with substantial perks, now want taxnayers' money to prowant taxpayers' money to provide them with even more af-fluent lifestyles. If public money is available, let it be used where it is needed.

wants this. Most people want feroer MPs. Like the rest of the public sector, the total amount available for pay should be cash-limited. Thus if MPs wish their pay to double, their number should be reduced by a corresponding factor of two.

Roger Smith. LUT, Loughborough, Leicestershire LE11 3TU. SHOULD apply one simple test widely used in the public sector: are MPs

pay levels sufficient to recruit and retain? There is no shortage of applications, nor have we seen an exodus of sitting MPs leaving the trade. The conclusion must be that pay levels are high enough, and the question should rather be whether lower salaries are

drawing a salary when they do not turn up for work. Next there should be a per-

Name and address supplied. IRSTLY, we need to intro-duce an allowance for attendance. We cannot continue with the old practice of people

answer questions directly. Penalties would be introduced for bores and toadies Backbenchers would only be paid when a vote takes place. Colin Adkins. 55b Kingscourt Road,

BELIEVE the public would

support higher pay for MPs if the present incumbents would agree to leave. This would give us the opportunity to elect people who are worth telephone-number salaries. Daniel Currie. 30 Radipole Road. London SW6 5DL. M confused: the Govern-ment spends several years

attempting to convince us that Conservative pay rates (ie low pay) are the only way to attract investment. You'd have thought the fact that our MPs are the third-worst paid in Europe was another sign of our increasing prosperity. Howard Borrell. 15 Easedale Close, Chesterfield SH0 4XP.

WHY do Conservative MPs want improved pay formance element: rating to help maintain standards Tavistock Road, would be determined by a and integrity at Westminster? Okehampton, panel drawn from a cross sec- I thought they saw no Devon EX20 4LX.

9 Elm Bank Drive, Nottingham NG3 5AL.

TTH allowances and ex-penses, most MPs cost the taxpayer about £100.000 a year, not counting the free trips abroad. And with many of them using their wife or partner as secretary or per-sonal assistant, most of the £100,000 stays in the family. There's also a generous pension when they leave and redundancy pay if they get chucked out. And during the long summer recess most of them seem to be able to afford to go swanning off to second homes in summier climes for months at a time, even though long holidays are the often-used excuse for denying

schoolteachers the proper rate for the job.

For every MP who thinks
they are underpaid, there will
be at least 10 equal or better
people in their constituency
only too anxious to the job. So they might as well stand aside and let some unemployed or underpaid person get on the

(maybe) buildings (non-spe-cific) for people of different faiths, and for the regenera-

tion of the inner cities. He

asks questions; he thinks: he does things. Does all that merit the hos-

tility and contempt dished out

by chattering hacks like

It is ironic that she displays

the very casual brutality and

cynical cheapness she de-

plores in the rest of our

gravy train. E H Wood.

Bennett?

society. Bel Mooney.

Bath.

Jails and Wales

WAS disappointed that you did not offer the Prison Service the opportunity to com-ment before printing Bob Johnson's account of the con-sequences of the closure of C wing at Parkhurst (Jail shock for Howard, January 27). We have known for some time that it would no longer be possible to continue the very good work Dr Johnson has undertaken with the difficult prisoners in the special unit. This was a direct conse-quence of the Learmont En-quiry recommendation that Parkhurst should be down-graded and removed from the high-security estate. This downgrading meant that Parkhurst could no longer hold the Category A prisoners with whom Dr Johnson has

worked so successfully. We are, however, deter-mined to continue the good work of Parkhurst C wing and will be establishing a similar unit in another location. For the moment, the Category A prisoners from C wing have gone to the two other special units that al-ready exist at Woodhill and Hull prisons, where they will receive the support and supervision they need. R R Tilt.

Director General, H M Prison Service. Cleland House, Page Street, London SW1P 4LN.

MANY people in the Rhonda spent four days and nights last week without electricity. What is happen-ing? If this was England, would this situation proceed for *four days?* Joan E Green 26 Riverside Park, erthyr Tydfil,

Mid Glamorgan CF47 8PQ.

AFTER my complaint regarding 299-worth of overcharging the local TSB branch finally responded by saying they had "zeroised" the charges. Does this trans-late as admitting a foul-up? Roy Davis.

18 Greystones Hall Road. Hunters Bar, Sheffield S11 7BA.

Please include a full postal address, even on e-mailed telephone number. We may edit letters: shorter ones are more likely to appear. We regret we cannot acknowledge those not



A plea for less bad spelling's

AY I suggest that the public display of incorrect written English be punishable by law? For example: each wrong spelling on a notice or sign might carry a fine of \$10; a misplaced apos-trophe — £15; the misuse of a word such as "less" instead of "fewer" — £20. And so on. The responsibility for spy-

ing out such errors would rest with Language Wardens, who would wear a smart uniform with a cap based on the mortar-board. They might be out-of-work English teachers or retired headmistresses. These wardens would first of all attach a warning notice to the offending sign. If the mistake Blackpool FY3 9AT.

were not corrected within two weeks, a Fixed Penalty Notice would be attached. For noncompliance, non-payment of fine, or repeated offences, the perpetrator would have to attend compulsory evening classes in spelling and

grammar.
These measures might seem Draconian, but the situation is desperate. I know of at least one store that has, in its men's department, aban doned the use of the posses sive entirely. And, in my local market today, I noticed five unnecessary apostrophes. Michael E Harvey.

Shed a tier for Berkshire

DAVID MCKIE'S article on | would protect council ser the future of Berkshire | vices and council-tax payers (Comment page, January 31) was very well written, but he failed to mention one crucial

If Berkshire County Council is replaced by six unitary councils as proposed, it will cost the local taxpayer approximately £10 million extra every year - either through increases in council tax or cuts in services. That figure does not include the trans-itional costs estimated at £16 million in the first year alone. When the people of Berk-shire who took part in a Mori poll were informed of this, 73 per cent said they would prefer to retain the two-tier

The agreement was also reached at a time when the Government had stated that it intended to replace county councils throughout England with unitaries. The goalposts were moved, four unitaries for Berkshire were ruled out, and the county council quite rightly re-evaluated its position and decided "no change" was the only option that

R D Mowatt. Berkshire County Council.

A follow-on

Shire Hall, Shinfield Park, Reading, Berkshire RG2 9XW.

PO Box 912,

VEN using the BBC's bud lake issue with Will Wyatt's assertion (Letters, January 31) that the BBC's recent bid for World Cup cricket high-lights is "identical" to the one made to BSkyB last autumn The fact is that the BBC offered £600,000 (conditionally) last year and increased the offer to a more realistic £1,000,000 only this week. Even a step up the BBC hier-archical ladder cannot turn .000,000 into £1,000,000. Trevor East.
Executive Director, Sport.

News Corporation Ltd. 6 Centaurs Business Park Isleworth, Middx TW7 50D.

God bless the Prince of Wales

N A sensible column about asked for seriousness, for the Sarah Cook affair, Catherine Bennett (Oh to be in cific) for people of different Turkey now that Sarah's there, January 30) indulges in a gratuitons swipe at the Prince of Wales, citing him as a one of the reasons the girl might choose to leave

England. With characteristic unpleasantness she describes the Prince as "tampon-lov-ing", thus condoning snooping and the reporting of a pri-vate telephone call — an incident which, if it happened to Bennett or any of her friends, would be greated

with outrage.
What the bell is urrong with
Bennett and her ilk? The
Prince of Wales reads, prays,
loves the theatre and music, tells jokes, likes a dry Martini - and works his butt off to help deprived young people find a future. He detests the destruction of the environment and supports multicul-turalism — issues most Guardian readers would take

extremely seriously.

Far from giving a "lecture"
on the millennium, he simply

H. Rectory Lane,
Bracknell,
Berks RG12 7AY.

Somerset BA1 9BW. **Question time**

A CONSERVATIVE Government is an organised hypocrisy" — Disraeli, Hansard 1845. "New Labour is an organised hypocrisy" — Portillo, Radio 4 1998 Portillo, Radio 4 1996. Who shall I believe?

A Country Diary

have been sceptical but now I believe there is a family of big cats living on the Otterburn, Elsdon moors. A farmer's wife told me of two different attacks which their sheep suf-fered. Claw marks on the dead ewes' backs as well as large pug marks in the snow convinced her that there was a large feline predator in the neighbourhood. A gamekeeper saw a large black beast in his headlights late one night prowling around his pheasant poult pens. With lambing imminent, hill shepherds are being vigilant. Recently our cattle stampeded for no good reason," most unusual and worrying at this time of the year. They will come into the bemmels to lamb but then they must go out to pasture. Hard weather

NORTHUMBERLAND: There | will drive predators to hang have been an increasing num-ber of reports over the last is falling and several local months of sheep being roads are blocked. Snow and mauled on our hill farms by black frosts in the Cheviots what locals presume to be a can decimate woodcock and wild cat or a puma. Sightings of the beast are rare and we bills are more suited to dissnipe because their delicate bills are more suited to discovering worms in wet, soft soil. I recently flushed curiew from a half-frozen stream at a range of no more than 12 yards. The thrush can, both resident and migratory, risk being practically wiped out Peewits are now conspicuous by their absence and I am glad that they will have found warmer climes and more fruitful feeding grounds before starvation overcomes them. Present flocks of these birds with their distinctive winter call are not the same individuals which entertain us with their nuptial display in spring for they are now wintering in the south. Our said one shepherd. "And the beautiful Cheviot hills attract ewes refused to feed which is increasing numbers of geolobeautiful Cheviot hills attract gists, botanists, bird-watchers and hill climbers but it is still possible to walk for an hour and not meet a soul VERONICA HEATH

SHIP

Diary

5?

Matthew Norman

ONFUSION sur-rounds my vanishing friend Dr Julian Lewis, the radio ham of Tory Central Office. Is he safe or isn't he? You will recall the panic caused by his failure to return my calls. Yesterday, finally, a letter arrived purporting to be from him: but it is hard to believe he wrote it himself. The writer claims to be "surprised" at my message (as though we were strangersi) and describes my ap-peals for positive sightings as "boring" (uncharacteris-tically wounding). He also declares himself a fan of Chris Mullin MP, "a jour-nalist of great integrity . . . You, by contrast," he goes on, twisting the knife, "have shown yourself to be nothing of the kind. There-fore I see no point in talking to you." This self-important tone is so out of character, it is difficult to imagine what has happened. Has a per-sonality disorder robbed him of that delicious gift for self-perody? Has some inter-loper stolen his headed notepaper? Or has he been kidnapped by socialist agitators, and replaced at Cen-tral Office by a cybernautic clone? Until we find out, the search for the real Julian

HERE are signs that Mandy Mandelson, the MP for Hartlepool, is succeeding in training the town's Labour councillors to parliamentary levels of obedience. Asked by the Hartlepool Mail about Harriet Harman, eight Labour councillors refused to comment, while only one of the other 18 called for her to resign. Talent spotters among Labour whips should look closely at coun-cillor Kevin Cranney, who announced that he knew nothing whatever of the St Olave's debate, and in fact had never heard of Harriet Harman at all.

AM intrigued by an ad-vert in the Nursing Times. Basildon and Thurrock general hospitals are looking for nurses. Applicants, it says, "will be surprised at what the Acute Trust has to offer". Suprised indeed: beneath the caption "wish you were here" is a photo of a sunlit sandy beach. "Of a what?" says a bemused recruit-ment officer. "Why am I laughing? Well, Basildon's not quite on the coast, is it? Southend's 15 miles away. Has it got a sandy beach? Er, Portugal."

Tis Sky TV's dream to be taken for a serious rival to the BBC, and to this end it has been chasing the Royal Television Society award for best-produced news programme. This year, it fancied its chance for its coverage of the end of the Rosemary West trial. When the RTS judges met last Thursday, the tape was inserted — but not until it began to play did Sky's chances evaporate: some-one had forgotten to transfer the footage from the double speed at which it was speed, and the judges saw the conclusion of the West trial performed in the style of the late Benny Hill.

e or thoses

estiontime

15.

N today's extract from With Nails, his film diaries, we find Richard E Grant once again smashing the actorly sterotype to smithereens. It's 1988, and in Hollywood Richard E spends Valentine's Day with Madonna, before meeting "Mr Stallone and Mr Shwarzenegger" (such unaffected respect for the stars) at a premiere. Meanwhile, on his way to meeting "Mr" Coppola, a voice yells
"Richard!". It is Julia
Roberts, who is playing Tinkerbell in Hook. Quoting her, Richard E picks up the story: "Will you stay and play awhile? D'you wanna meet Steven? Tink links arms and leads me to meet Mr Spielberg, Manage a Pleased to meet you', and be replies 'You're Withnail, This is all a bit too Never-Never Land." It is indeed.

RIGHBOURS sum-moned police to a break-in in Biggleswade, Beds, reports Police magazine, when they heard banging noises from the kitchen of a house they knew to be vacant. When a certain PC Eymore entered the house, he found the family cat desperately trying to dislodge a tin of cat food



Signs of life on the mortuary floor

Commentary

Hugo Young

OST people watching politics this winter will find it an abject mystery.

They see a mismatch between time and content. They're used to exchanges of gro-tesque misinformation, and political leaders screaming at political leaders screaming at each other, but only, on the present scale, during elections. Yet they know an election is at least a year away. These public scenes seem to have no connection with anything that affects the public. They signal a private game of which we know little, voters must conclude. And the voters are not wrong.

ers are not wrong.

The private world in question is that of the Conservative Party. It is trying to re-make itself into something that bears a passing resem-blance to an election machine, an aspect of its identity that's gone missing for three years. Called to fight, let alone win, a general election, it came to possess not a fragment of the confidence neces-

sary for such an enterprise. Now this may be changing. A vestige of belief begins to penetrate the corporate mind. Starting inside the Prime Minister's tormented head, fanning out behind him into the ranks of professional MPs, and extending, as they hope, through the bedraggled ranks of volunteer forces round the country, belief in that weird entity called the Tory Party, and in its mission to defeat a two-timing, hypo-critical, don't-watch-my-lips national catastrophe called the Labour Party, is return-ing a little colour to the hol-low cheeks of the near-insen-

tient cadaver.

Everything you hear, in other words, is directed at other people not you — unless you are a Tory activist. In "hypocrisy", moreover, the high command think they have found the idea to neu-tralise what mostly accounted for their near-death experi-ence, namely "sleaze". There's a nice equivalence be-tween these amears. Both raise character questions, both spread a patina of mis-trust, both offer limitless op-portunities for the inclusion under a single label of every trick the other side gets up to. Each makes a sound-bite mantra, supposedly the only kind of politics the voters understand. Mr Major has been worried, not to say out-raged, by the power of

"sleeze". "Hypocrisy" is the revenge Ms Harman offered him for nothing. The fact that the mantra, whether uttered by Gummer on housing or Major on schools or Heseltine on crime, contains hyperbole and plain lies is beside the point. This is not about the reasoned persuasion of scep-tic floaters but inflaming the guts of the faithful who need a

song to sing.

It is already having an effect, not least on Mr Major.
His Cabinet enemies are changing sides. They think he's begun to control his destiny and theirs. One of them told me last week, tongue only slightly in cheek, that Major, contemptuously seeing off Mr contemptiously seeing off Mr Blair and doggedly pursuing his statesmanlike duties in Ireland, was a hero whom all must now acclaim. Maybe the centre is beginning to take hold.

The centre is certainly more prehensile than we think, thanks to Mr Heseltine. For example, he may easily discover, if he wants to, the name of my loyal informant above. It's a little-known fact that, as part of his brief to get a grip on government co-ordi-nation, the deputy prime minister logs every ministerial movement on computer. Never mind the £9 billion we've suddenly heard his

ready tells him where every minister is having lunch. Hezza can sit before his screens, tracking the co-or-dinative data which every private office is required to feed him daily. By evening, admittedly, the screens close down. When civil servants go home, ministers are off the network. Big Brother evidently lunches but he does not dine. But as the orchestrator of "hypocrisy", the more un-reasonable the better, he's been successful with the audience that interests him.

This audience includes, not east, the media. Again, the priority at this dire stage is the faithful. Through the autumn, the Tory press showed unprecedented signs of impending desertion. It was flirting with Tony Blair. This had a powerful whiff of intellectual dishonesty. Anti-Major journalists saw a Blair victory as the necessary pre-

Mr Major has been worried, not to say outraged, by the power of 'sleaze'

lude to a hard right take-over of the Tory Party. Many still do. But the seeming collapse of the party's own self-belief appeared to justify the flirta-tion in another way. Re-mak-ing self-bolief is the essential pre-condition of persuading three or four tycoons that their natural prejudices should not, after all, be be-trayed. Out of rage at this infamous "hypocrisy", that pro-cess is now under way. I Never mind the £9 billion suspect we have already seen we've suddenly heard his electronic dream-machine might save by taking over human Whitehall jobs, it al-

to the desirability of a Labour government.
So: something has at last

happened for the Tory Party. It no longer looks like a party lying down to die. Whether it can experience a renewal of its political life, however, is another matter. Its own divisions over Europe are cov-ered in the thin disguise of silence, which the quite modest provocation of other people's noise will be enough to sweep away at any moment Its attempt to overshadow a pattern of sleaze with clouds of rhetoric about hypocrisy of the Scott Report, which can hardly fail to present itself as a litany of the higher chica-nery. Besides, in a contest between these smears, hypocrisy carries the smaller political charge. In their hearts, many voters may sympathise with a thrustful parent, rather fewer with a back-to-basics adulerer or a secret armer of Sad

Above all, however, the voter will be mystified if not repelled by the game that seems to be going on. One of the features of politics consistently held in lowest regard by the same who rearrowl to oninion. those who respond to opinio pollsters is the cheap adver-sarial savagery which party politicians sometimes see fit to confuse with the national interest. During an election there is often no time to unpick the seductive simplicities of the news manipulators.
With 1996 stretching ahead,
people have all the leisure
they need to contemplate the obnoxious mendacity dis-played by Mr Heseltine and Mr Howard when they say that the Labour Party is the villain's friend. Only a Tebbi tist Tory, yearning for some thing to get him off his butt will buy that. With him and her, it will do the trick. But millions, the audience whom

were. Having established comprehensive schools 30 years ago as a wholly desirable social objective, I think you (in a representative capacity again) forgot that it was also an educational objective that had to be made to work. It should have been the beginning of an educational agenda, not merely the end of a social one. We promised excallence for all, but we averted our eyes when performance seemed to fall short of promise in case it might be seen to contaminate the founding principle or upset interest groups. We contanted our-selves with general pleas for "more resources" without linking this essential require-ment to a wider agenda. Yet that agenda was staring

us in the face. It was about how to universalise excelso differently. The research on this (as well as the commonsense) was there to be had. It is all about good heads, good teachers and good organisation in a culture of high expectations. No quick fixes, just sustained school-improvement strategies year on year and a willingness to get hold of the difficult issues such as incompetent heads, poor teachers and bed pedagogics. It also involves having the information to work on, less to enable parents to make un-available choices and more to make good public policy.

ERHAPS you see why ERHAPS you see why
I can't help thinking
that it is what you do
not say that is most
revealing. Then there is that word that you spit out like a foreign body. Selection stares out from every estate agent's window. At what point did different kinds of provision for different aptitudes become antithetical to the comprehensive principle? I won't remind you that Tawney found it per-fectly possible to combine an egalitarian belief in a common culture with an attachment to the post-1944 tripartism; but I will remind you that he made a powerful socialist case for not confusing equality of treatment with identity of treatment. The unique British curse is that we have been unable to reconcile diversity of provision with parity of esteem. Nobody in their right mind (not even the Tories)
wants to bring back the 11plus, but this is not a reason for not being realistic about selection. You say you want to abolish the remaining gram-mar schools. I should like to invite them to become centres of excellence for those children within a comprehensive system who can benefit, in different ways, from what

they might have to offer.

I should like to do the same with the public schools. Here

It was your old chum Tony Crosland, architect of the com prehensive revolution, who said that if we abolished the grammar schools and left the public schools alone we should have made matters worse, not better. We have not been very imaginative on that front either. It's about time we were. Now that I've got the quarrel out of my system, could I propose an alliance?

Dr Tony Wright is Labour MP for

Acts of God and microbes and men



Natasha Walter

has announced that it will be launching a new research project into the mys-terious Gulf war syndrome. which has apparently left sol-diers and their children suffering from a melange of inex-plicable defects and diseases. Certainly the MoD may have a medical case to answer. But Gulf war syndrome also carries an unnerving symbolic

The idea that we have begun to create our own ill-pesses is oddly resonant. We may like to believe that an empirical medical viewpoint always characterises our ap-proach to disease, but our views are constantly coloured by metaphors and moral questions.
Previous generations

tended to make one of two metaphors out of disease: that it came as punishment from the gods, or that it was created by individual character.
Plagues dropped from the hand of God to punish a whole community; but discancer were held to spring directly from a patient's character. "Cancer is regarded as a disease to which the psych-ically defeated, the inexpressive, the repressed are partic-ularly prone, as tuberculosis was regarded throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries as a disease apt to strike the hypersensitive, the talented, the passionate," Susan Sontag wrote furiously after finding herself personally judged for having cancer.

We still put certain illnesses down to individual be-haviour, "lifestyle" and "choice". But the newly powerful metaphor for disease in this generation is that it is created by the hubris of modern science. As a result of the shame we feel about the way we have despoiled our environment, we believe that nato cover the country with roads, to control animals and crops and forests, will become that is coming back to haunt obsessed with why schools efforts to wipe out all disease, serving the same kind of to cover the country with catchment area could perform roads, to control animals and

Gulf war syndrome bolsters this interpretation of disease. Opinion, but also a moral one: The syndrome has a plausible basis in the cocktail of vaccinations and anti-nerve-gas tifically justified in believing pills with which army doctors | that car fumes cause asthma thought they could stay one in children; but the explana-step ahead of any bacterial or tion also packs a moral punch.

cent children. This is the kind of disease that frightens us most now: the diseases that we have brought into being, our terrible Frankensteinian monsters. BSE punches way above its weight in the fear it engenders, because it too seems to have arisen from tampering with nature; if those clever-clever farmers had not fed cows on sheep's brains, this slow-burning de-generative disease would never have stalked our nightmares.

nightmares.

The appearance of Aids created many myths — myths that took us back to ideas of collective and individual guilt, as well as myths that fed our fear of modern science. One of the most fre-quently repeated and least justified stories of the origin of the HIV virus was that it crossed to humans from mon-keys captured in African jungles for medical experiments If we did not unsist on exploiting our fellow animals, the implicit message warned, this most terrifying killer would never have entered the ring.
More reasonably, we watch
and fear the spread of superresistant bacteria and varuses that have spawned from our own well-meaning efforts to control them. Massive pro-grammes by the World Health Organisation to try to control malaria have resulted in strains that are resistant to almost all known drugs. Out breaks of exotic diseases like Lassa and Ebola cluster around hospitals in the devel-oping world, where viruses that might otherwise burn out fast are encouraged by shared needles and the close ness of the patients. Even the bright white hospitals of Britain are constantly found to be breeding super-resistant

ESTSELLING books that threaten a future apocalypse when the microbes really fight back are filled with doctors beating their breasts over the Pando ra's box they have opened. As author Mark Lappe said about antibiotics: "Unfortu-nately, we played a trick on the natural world by seizing hold of these chemicals... We have organisms now pro-liferating that never existed before in nature. We have selected them." And another roice of doom in

This is not just a medical step ahead of any bacterial or chemical weapons that Iraq would release. The clever-clever sophistication of this kind of modern warfare has now, apparently, boomeranged to hurt not just the soldiers, but also their inno-





Good grammar

As Labour agonises over education, backbench MP Tony Wright takes issue with Roy Hattersley, arch-enemy of secondary selection

when many about you water to schools need is a decade of and fraternal way, where you are traverey as our pairon saint.

So why, reading your piece clear objectives (even worth a Monday, did I feel an irresistible urge to pick a quarrel vant arguments from the past.

The what these is a decade of and fraternal way, where you were in those miserable years. Parents needed politicians who would argue for them about quality, resources and expectations, not those who Monday, did I feel an irresistible urge to pick a quarrel with you? It's not that I think what you say is wrong, but that it is not enough. In part it is a matter of tone. While I admire your magnificent certainties, they do not seem to connect with the present anguished educational debate. Perhaps it is too anguished educational debate. Teachers across the land must be wondering why they bother. So why not just leave the arguments from the past. So why not just leave the thought it sufficient to repeat the dumination and those who have a duty to send their children to bad schools. Unless we understand why the comprehensive principle. You are right about the children to bad schools. Unless we understand why the duty of parents to is why the duty of parents to because they looked as though the for their children (I prafer that is why the duty in right here, by the way) parental concerns about quality, resources and their thought it sufficient to repeat thought it sufficient to repeat thought it sufficient to repeat the arguments from the past. You are right about the children to bad schools. Unless we understand why the dumination of thought it sufficient to repeat thought it sufficient to repeat thought it sufficient to repeat the argument there, as you seem to did mantras to them about the intrinsic superiority of the comprehensive principle. You are right about the children to bad schools. Unless we understand why the duty of parents to the children to bad schools. Unless we understand why the duty of parents to the duty of parents to the about the children to bad schools. Unless we add to the thought it sufficient to repeat the children to bad schools.

You are right about the children to bad schools. Unless we add they the children to bad schools. The parent is to the about the children to bad schools. The children to repeat the children to repe ihle urge to pick a quarrel with you? It's not that I think

EAR Roy, I write as a fan. You are a beacon of socialist values. Even during the bleak mid-ing the ble winter of Thatcherism you to I just have to drop in to one of the primary schools in my when many about you were losing theirs. We share R. H. schools need is a decade of

hull, got out cheque books, or pulled our hair out in desperation. It reached a point of such political embarrassment, you will recall, that the council had to set up an inquiry to find out what was wrong with its schools (from which much that is good has since flowed). A London issue indeed! I would ask, in a friendly

inees by a Labour council of politicians to provide a de-that preferred more exciting cent education for all child-projects than educating its children, and thousands of asked to send their children to parents (like me) baled our poor schools out of ideological children out into the city's grammar schools, smuggled should be asked to eat in lousy them over the border into Soli-restaurants as a matter of restaurants as a matter of social solidarity. If the Labour Party was to be seen to make such a request, people would walk away from the party as walk away from the party as fast as they have been moving towards it, whatever you or anybody else might say to them. The Tories know this, even if some in our party do take over half the places at not. Those with any kind of Oxbridge, those entry points choice will seek to exercise it. to power and privilege. This is The task of keeping the profes-social engineering. sional classes attached to the state system is a real one, but it will certainly not be accom-plished by telling them they have a duty to send their children to bad schools.

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Card trick . . . Reese combined exceptional insight into the game with a mastery of the English language

Terence Reese

A life on the bridge

who towered over the game of contract bridge for six decades, has died aged in the land that a considerable seems of the learned bridge from his audience would witness any prother when only six Since in the seems of bridge. In those observer, the Evening News of some learned new work and the Lady. By his death, he had written some 83 books on bridge and even less about bridge and even less about punctuation." Great strengther when only six Since in the pipeline. mother when only six. Since hold 13 cards, he had to ar-range his cards behind a ure in the British tournament cushion. By the age of 14 he world. He formed a famous was competing in bridge partnership with Boris Schawas competing in bridge

scholarship to Oxford and bety bridge team at the same time as Iain Macleod, the future Chancellor of the Exchequer, captained the Cambridge team. Unknown to the college authorities, he also ran a book at various nearby greybound tracks as a profit-Oxford, he decided to become

a bridge professional. In the 1930s, Reese and four other leading players of the day — Jack Marx, Macleod, "Skid" Simon - gathered at a club in Acol Street, Hampstead. After several evenings of discussion they gave birth to the Acol bidding system, still used today by the great majority of British players. The hallmarks of the system were a variable no-trump. openings of one heart and one spade which could be made on a four-card suit, and inter-

in 1936, Reese hosted early lific bridge writer. He was radio and television pro- bridge correspondent for the

mistakes they made.

The tall, balding Terence piro, winning the Gold Cup eight times and the Master Pairs seven times (both a recard player but conservative in the auction; Schapiro was more flamboyant, choosing bids and plays which were likely to provoke the opponents into error.

They were the anchor pair in the British teams of the able sideline. On leaving day, winning the European Oxford, he decided to become | Championships of 1948, 1949, 1954 and 1963. In 1955 came winning the world champion-ship in New York. In 1961 Championship (where the hands are pre-set by an expert panel), and in 1962 he added the World Pairs Olympiad. His supreme technique, and the consistency of his results, led many to rank him as the

world's finest player. Despite his achievements at the table, it is as a writer on greatest fame. He was editor Joining forces with Hubert
Phillips and Harold Franklin

Joining forces with Hubert
Phillips and Harold Franklin

Joining forces with Hubert

Phillips and Harold Franklin

Joining forces with Hubert

Phillips and Harold Franklin

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Phillips and Harold Franklin

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Joining forces with

about these books? Reese combined exceptional insight into the game with a mastery of the English language. His two most famous classics. Reese On Play and The Expert Game, were years ahead of their time, explaining advanced concepts that many

Supreme technique and consistency of results led many to rank him the world's finest player

cal with never a word wasted, and he exhibited a dry, sometimes acerbic, sense

What of Reese, the man? He made many lifelong friends but not everyone appreciated the way in which he expressed his opinions so openly. Admirers, such as myself, were greatly entertained by some of the book reviews in his Observer column. Of a work entitled Twelve Lessons On Bridge, he

of some learned new work was "this writer knows little about punctuation." Great stuff, unless you were the

Terence Reese married his devoted wife, Alwyn, in 1970. For a long time they lived in Woods Mews, off Park Lane, central London. More recently, they moved to a fine Edwardian apartment, over-looking the seafront at Hove. Twenty years ago, my own

humorous short stories on bridge had been published in various magazines but I was having no luck getting a publisher to accept my first book of them. In desperation I wrote to Reese, asking if he would contribute a preface. 'Better than that," he replied. "I'll become a co-author." The lancz within two days.

So began a great friendship for me to write the first draft of each chapter and submit it to Reese through the post. Two days later, it would be returned, annotated in red ink. Any hackneyed phrase was marked "Oh, no!" in the margin, along with a suggested improvement. His most common amend-

ment was simply to delete words or phrases. "Adds nothing." he would put. Once he wrote: "I will give you the benefit of the doubt and aswrote: "This author should sume you do know that can-hasten to take them". An not should be one word."

merited a "Good!".
When, on Victor Mollo's

spondent of the Mail on Sun-day, I asked Reese if I should expect many letters from the readers. "Good gracious, no," he replied. "They only write of some sort. You mustn't encourage them, at any cost. I just return the reader's letter with the odd 'yes' or 'no' scribbled on it. I rarely receive a second letter from the same source

Just before his death, I spen the day with Reese at the Macallan International Pairs in London. Although he had suf-fered from deafness and a failing memory for many years, his mental powers were undi-minished. "Unbelievable!" he said to me after we had watched four world champions contest one hand. "Why on earth did be hold on to the dia-

At the gala dinner afterwards he sat next to Omar Sharif, a close friend for many years. It was excellent that Reese's many friends and admirers in London, includ ing the 86-year-old Boris Schapiro, had one final chance to see the old master. His contribution to the game has been immense.

David Bird

John Terence Reese, bridge master, born August 28, 1913; died January 29, 1996

Dan Duva

Straight puncher in the crooked ring

leath of Dan Duva, at the age of 44 from a brain tumour. Through his organisation, Main Events, and with his rivals, Don King and Bob Arum, he shared the domination of professional boxing in the United States and the millions of dollars it generates.

boxing all his life. It was his American influence which helped Lennox Lewis to his world heavyweight title: whenever Lewis fights in the US it is under the Main Events banner. Dan's father is still active as a trainer and manager. He worked closely with Rocky Marciano who be came virtually an uncle to the

That, however, was the clos of the ring. Lou steered his son through law college so that when he went into the fight game it would be away from the graft of the gym and

graduated, satellite and pay TV were extending the audi ence for boxing in a way which meant that promoters were adding more noughts to the money they earned and paid out. Boxing no longer relied on the box office and the Duvas, father and son quickly followed King and Arum along this new and prof-itable path. The Duvas — from family business. Father trained and managed the



handled the box office; Kathy. publicity; Dan made the deals with the TV companies.

Dan founded Main Events in the late 1970s. It was a small family business in which father found and made some good fighters and his son put together shows in a monthly series of televised bouts from like Livingstone Bramble, Johnny Bumphus, Tony Tucker and Mike McCallum had some of their first tele-vised contests from these tour-

come world champions. Arum were the big stake bolders with major boxing shows in the casino towns of Las Vegas and Atlantic City. The Duva family firm were joined by another lawyer, Shelley Finkel, and it was the Duva Jnr-Finkel partnership which took them on to boxing's world stage with the first Sugar Ray Leonard-Thomas

generation of fighters, by preparing many of the US team for the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles. The work which Duva Sur did for some of them in the run-up to those games, paid off. Evander Holyfield, Pernell Whitaker, Meldrick Taylor, Mark Breland and Tyrell Biggs all won medals, and firmly established Main Events as the third promotional organisation in the domination of US boxing. From that success came some major title fights with the three Holyfield-Riddick Bowe fights in which Duva was involved, grossing over \$100 mil-lion dollars.

For many of the early years the Duva family worked with Mickey Duff, the British promoter, and were involved in joint promotions in Atlantic City. The Duva connection provided Duff with many of his American opponents and gave a window of opportunity to British fighters. In a busi-ness not noted for an abundance of honesty, Duff recently described Dan Duva as "dead straight".

Dan Duva was often seen as a rather cold, unemotional character. Yet he could conduct a press conference. in articulate fashion - in contrast to some of the bizarre antics of his rival. He brought a sober balancing act to a busi-ness sometimes on the point of

Appreciation: Don Simpson

Hard days and nights

relished and courted. He was, interesting character than that image might indicate. When I moved to Los Angeles in 1971 to take up a post in charge of film soundtracks for Warner Brothers, I found Don languishing in the publicity department. We soon became friends and I learned to appre-

ligence and energy.
When I left WB, he joined

me in various ill-fated "projects in development". He became progressively wary of my European tastes and interest in art films, at one point declaring angrily that my in-terest in seeing Celine et Julie Vont En Bateau, based on the blurb in a festival brochure, meant that I "would never make a hit film". He was quite right, of course. His credit card was cancelled and he crashed his car.

By Hollywood standards.

Steve Tisch tipped him off about a job as an assistant to one of the heads of production at David Picker's Paramount Studios and loaned him a car to go to the interview. He got the \$300-a-week job and spent every night in the office going project, film by film, reading contracts, memos, script drafts - everything.

Picker and pro-ceeded to see all the staff one by one. No one knew anything except Don, who knew everything. At the end of a two-hour interview, Eisner told his secretary to "get this guy an office next to mine". Within a couple of years he was head of production.

Don read voraciously — but only American books and only living authors. He was a closet intellectual who con-sciously set out to suppress Joe Boyd

HE image of Don those events were tantamount his taste in the interests Simpson (obituary. to a ticket back to Alaska, supplying the mass mark supplying the mass market with what it wanted. He had been juted by his girlfriend at Oregon University and vowed never again to put himself in a vulnerable position emotionally - hence his taste for

professional love.

He pushed himself to the edge of every kind of experience, from Scientology (rejected contemptuously after 50 hours of "auditing") to EST - we enjoyed it but he

every manner of drug After Top Gun and Beverly Hills Cop. Don disappeared into the world he always dreamed about - hookers. dope, millions of dollars, and playing hardball with the Hollywood power-brokers he always wanted to be able to for all these things was so palpable. I'm not convinced he wouldn't have agreed the bargain of what it eventually cost him.

Constance Tipper

Saviour of the shipping lanes

who has died aged 101, played a pivotal role, during the second world war, in identifying the cause of catastrophic hull fractures in Americanships, on which Allied supply lines were dependent. A graduate of Newnham College, Cambridge, in 1915 — and one of the first women to take rial College. London), Con-

R CONSTANCE Tipper, the university's natural metallurgist, crystallog sciences tripos — she went directly to the National Physical Laboratory to assist the first world war effort. There she studied mineral resources, the structure of refined materials and their response to impact. bending loads and corrosion. By 1926, when she took her first doctorate at the Royal

stance Tipper had become one of the few scientists in the world to seek ways of studying the relationship between the crystal structure of alloys, esstrength and durability. At Cambridge in the 1930s she developed techniques which could reveal the fine crystal structures of alloys under the microscope, and began studies of the response to stress of in-dividual metal crystals. This esoteric research proved of

profound importance.

By 1943 it was evident that the fleet of Liberty ships, carrying crucial supplies across the North Atlantic and on the intercompany was and built icy Archangel run — and built at great speed in the US to off-set huge Allied losses to Ger-man U-boats — were prone to catastrophic structural fail-

ures. Apparently sound vessels would suffer sudden fractures. which ran rapidly round the huil. The ships broke in half and, at sea, foundered so rapidly that losses were huge.
Their failure was mysteri-

ous. These were the first wholly-welded merchant ships, built from strong, prefabri-cated sections. Welding was being increasingly used for land-based structures and was a much quicker technique than the traditional riveted plate method. Teams of marine engineers were set up in the US and Britain to investigate. They believed they were seeking a generic fault in design. Constance Tipper joined the Admiralty team at Cambridge. She pointed out that the fallures occurred typically in ships operating in icy condi-

were dealing with a material failure, not a design failure. She showed that, at low tem-peratures, some kinds of steel underwent a rapid change from ductile to brittle behav iour, and pointed out that the method of fabrication would result in the creation of large crystals in the welded area. These could focus local es in the junctions between prefabricated parts and. under high loading, a ship might snap like a dry twig. Although unorthodox, her theory was accepted. Ship-yards were advised to improve their steel and find better ways of annealing welds; determining crystal structure and the temperature of transition from Tipper Test. After the war, the work became of even greater importance as the size of relded structures increased. Constance Tipper was naturally shy and never sought high academic status. She engineering at Cambridge until her retirement in 1960

ending her career as reader and still involved in research Always a musician, a painter and lover of the countryside she became organist at her local church in the Lake District, and maintained a creative and determined independence.

Anthony Tucker

Constance Tipper, scientist, born ductile to brittle behaviour in Steels became known as the 14, 1985

Birthdays

Jennifer Adams, superinten-dent, Central Royal Parks, 48; Kate Ashbrook, general sec-retary, Open Spaces Society, 41; Josceline Dimbleby, cookery writer, 53; Prof Sir Sam Edwards, FRS, physicist, 68; Don Everly, rock singer, 59; Godfrey Hodgson, writer and journalist, 62; Prof Douglas Johnson, historian of France, 71; Terry Jones, comedian, 54; Virginia Leng, Olympic horsewoman, 41: Sir Stanley Matthews, footballer. 81; Sir John Nott. banker, 64; Muriel Spark, novelist, 78; Princess Stephanie of Monaco, 30: Sir Peter Tapsell, Conservative MP, 66; Boris Yeltsin, president of

Death Notices

JOHNSON, on 28th Jerusny peacefully in hospital. Aler Owen, aged 89 years Buard member and Chief Commorcial manager (retired) of S.W.E.B. Funeral sortics at South Bristo Crematorium on Monday February Sth at 2,30mm Family Rowers only please but donations may be sent for Bristol Age Cara of Arthur E. Devey A. Som, innersid Rectors & States Tiesen, Maisca, Bristol. 8519 205. Telephone 01275-455207.

Birthdays

Engagements

MR A J COOPER and Miss I, & remon-the engagement is announced between Addam, son of Professor and Mrs Malcolm Cooper, and Listy, edder daughter of Mr and Mrs Richard Kenyon all of kembronth, Warnedsking



Punk planet

THE SOUND in Salt Lake City is mangled by the room' barnlike acoustics, but the band doesn't care. The packed concrete floor breaks up into honeycomb cells of thrashing fans spinning in circles, rocketing off one another, Afterward, I ask Sarah thought of the show. She pulls my hand to a golfballsize knot on the back of her head, beneath her blue hair. "I wanted to jump up and kiss Tim — but when I tried to, a bouncer dropped me on my head," she says. She has pats of blood on her white T-shirt and says she passed out twice

tonight. She looks radiant. "It was a total punk-rock show. One of the best I've ever seen.' Kessenich and four friends come from Evanston, Wyoming, 90 miles away. In Evanston they set heat up by the dozen or so

local jocks - or sportos, as

they call them.
Rancid gave these kids a eeling of acceptance, but now they face new misery: the same people who torment them for dressing like punks are turning into Rancid fans by the thousands. Tonight punks have even been shoved aside by snowboarders and sportos racing to the heart of the mosh pit.

At show's end, there's a convergence far stranger than the alchemy of jock and punk. A few buildings away, a cowboy dance is winding down. And so two groups become one. Stetsons and studs. cowboys and mohawked punks, all searching for their cars under the lights as the mainstream reshapes itself. RJ Smith uncovers the under class via Los Angeles "punkers" Rancid. From the New York Times magazine.

Tickets please

ACCORDING TO Darian Leader, a psychoanalyst who trained in Paris and works in Leeds, men and women have all sorts of clever ways of not communicating with one another. The writing and not posting of letters, which apprently is a peculiarly female one, is just one of them. Others include: marry ing your wife because she's not like your mum and then doing everything you possibly can to make her treat you as though she were. Women. it seems, have their own version of this. It goes: choosing a man as your "love object" precisely because he's always on the point of disappearing (eg, he's a soldier, a magician or somebody else's husband) ..[Leader's] is a study in the

vay our longings are refracted through our relationships, through language and, apparently most significantly, through our bodies ... Take Leader's discussion of the phallus. He suggests that it is a symbol of unobtainable desire which serves to highlight this disparity between our experience of desire in actual relationships and the fantasy vorld of desire we all inhabit In order to become integrated argues — we must necessar ily undergo, on a symbolic

level, a sort of voluntary cas-tration, which he defines as the act of "giving up some-thing for nothing". To explain his point he gives the example of travelling on the London Underground, of how when we reach our destination and the ticket machine retains our ticket we necessarily experience that split-second shock of, well, castration. He goes on to suggest that "most people who cheat on the Underground do so because of their unresolved relation to castration: either because they want something in return for what they have given up, or because they want continually to experience the castration, repre-

sented now by the encounter

by the inspector." Now I real-

ground is clamping down -

as it were — on fare-dodgers, but I wonder whether Lead-

ise that London Under-

er's analogy here isn't stretching a point a little, go-ing a phallus too far. William Taylor grapples, as it were, with the finer points of Darian Leader's new book Why Do Women Write More Letters than They Post? (Faber), in the Literary

By George

Title: George. Newstand price: \$3.95 (approx \$.01 per page). Number of pages with printed page numbers: 80 (28.5 per cent). Number of pages: 280 (302 including covers and unnumbered pull-out ads). Longest stretch without a printed page number: 13

Number of full-page adver-tisements: 165 (54.6 per cent). Number of full-page advertisements where I wasn't sure what was being advertised: 4. Number of words it takes Mark Leyner to describe Senator Richard Lugar's smile; 82 (includes allusions to podiatrist and aspirations of

Number of words it takes the Senator Lugar as someon who looks a bit young for his age: 167 (includes specula-tions on endocrinology). Page numbers that set forth editorial policy of superficial

A concise criticism of JFK Jar's may George ("not just politics as usual)" from Mike Sierra of Massachusetts, in George's letters section.



Spies R US Q. WHAT WERE your feel-

ings when you announced your resignation? cause it's not often that a prime minister is accused of spying — it's hard for me even to utter that word. I have a feeling of injustice. But I blame myself that my openness to another person was reckless. I have an enor-mous distaste about the conduct of Alganov. I treated him as a friend, and that friend turned out to be a pig . . . He came as a friend and acted as

a spy. Q. How did yu meet Alganov? A. In the Central Committee [where I worked], diplomats crawled all over the place. It was normal: those were "fraternal relations". But he was different. He was openminded, eager to discuss things, sociable. He would encourage mroe frequent meetings. When he moved to my drop by in the evening. Q. He never asked you for documents?

A. What could I have shown

him? draft bills, draft decrees? Anyone can pick those ment: there are stacks of them Q. The KGB has said they

didn't need agents among Polish communists since they give everything to the Russians anyway. A. That's the way things were. If the party adopted a

declaration and someone from the Soviet Embassy came over and asked what it meant, you told them. Why shouldn't you? Jozef Oleksy, recently ap-pointed Polish prime minister

terviewed in Newsweek. It is alleged that Oleksy passed secrets to a Russian spy during his time as a communist party functionary in the seventies and eighties.

Juckdaw wants your jewels. Email lackdawicguardian-.co.uk; fax 0171-713 4366; Jack-Farringdon Road, London ECIR JER.

Dan Glaister

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Finance Guardian

Former Labour leader attacked by Conservatives over £460m aid for troubled Spanish state airline Notebook

Fury over Kinnock bail-out

Passsengers take flight as huge debts and splits ground Iberia

Jolis Well in Brownis

HE former Labour leader and EU Transport Commissioner, Neil Kinnock, provoked a fu-rious political reaction from Conservative ministers and backbenchers last night for allowing Spain to pump 87 billion pesetas (£460 million) into its ailing state carrier

Mr Kinnock — embroiled in his first political conflict Brussels - said the cash for the struggling airline was not state aid in the traditional sense, and that the commission was committed to phas-ing out subsidies for airlines. But the usually urbans Transport Secretary, Sir George Young, angrily de-scribed the ruling as "a de-pressing decision that threatens to undermine all our efforts to establish fair com-

petition in the community aviation market."

He pointed out that UK air.

He pointed out that UK air.

The power of the community are the period of the community are the period of the community are the period of the period of

lines competed in Europe without subsidy, and it was time the EU insisted that other airlines were also run on purely commercial lines.
Sir George said he was particularly surprised that ticularly surprised that the commission had decided that the payments were not state aid. "It really does stretch credibility to claim that a commercial investor would

BRUSSELS' beil-out finds liberia in a parlons state, Adela Gooch writes from Madrid. It has losses of

150 billion pesetas, management, unions and pilots

disagree over a restructur

ing scheme and passengers are infuriated by constant

strikes and poor service.

mission approved over 2600 million in state aid for Iberia.

claiming the Brussels deci-sion was "a kick in the teeth" for British Airways, which receives no subsidies, and "a rules on competition".

reduce the 25,000 work force by 3,500 over 12 months and introduce aver-

age pay cuts of 8.3 per cent. Talks between manage-

opproval to a member state bailing out an uncompetitive business. But Sir Leon Britsioner and a former Tory In-dustry Minister, backed the

Mr Kinnock's decision was adopted unanimously by the commission yesterday. The commission had decided the be willing to put any money at all in Iberia. It has been re-opened by Mr Major today be treated as a state subsidy

The former Labour leader said the conditions attached by the commission, notably the obligation for Iberia to sell off most of its Latin American operations, were aimed at transforming the loss-making airline into a company that is attractive to

British Airways is already challenging through the Euro-

This week unions called for the renegotiation of a viability plan, devised last year, which sought to EU handout, 120 billion pe-Viasa will have to be sold off under new conditions imposed by Brussels. setas in 1992, paid for an ambitious expansion pro-gramme in Latin America. Iberia's 85 per cent stake in Aerlineas Argentinas and autumn cost the airline 7 billion pesetas and dis-gruntled passengers have since switched to private

during Prime Minister's questions, as the Government public shareholder that could seeks to take advantage of a former Labour leader giving grounds.

but as an investment by a subsidy to Air France, which seeks to take advantage of a former Labour leader giving grounds. struck between Mr Kinnock said it found the commis sion's ruling "surprising." A spokesman said the company tudement before deciding

> ish government had origi-nally sought to provide 130 billion pesetas (£688 million) to help the airline get back on its feet. This figure was later raised to 138 billion pesetas (£730 million). But the com-mission refused to allow the big corporate restructuring. After months of negotia-tions, Mr Kinnock gave the tas, and said Brussels would

be willing to consider a further 20 billion pesetas (£106 million) for the airline in

Edited by Mark Milner

S THE latest set of monthly monetary min-utes shows, Chancellor Kenneth Clarke is more con-cerned about the real economy than the traditional preoc cupations of central bankers the money supply, the level of the exchange rate, the cred-ibility of policy and so on. Over the next few months, however, expect him to de-

oank speak in an attempt to keep Britain's actual central banker, Eddie George, in

As and when global rates come down. Mr Clarke will be able to say that any cuts in UK borrowing costs merely maintain interest-rate differentials with Britain's main competitors.

Yesterday's cut in US interest rates shows Mr Clarke looks to be on safe ground. The American economy has been showing every sign of experiencing a classic soft landing, with the incipient inflationary pressures detected in 1994 quickly stamped on by the Fed. The most recent data from the US has been downbeat, and yesterday's move by the Fed was always a ques-

tion of when not if.
The position on continental Europe is even bleaker. German pronouncements on the state of their economy have already gone through stages familiar to those of us in the UK: first, no evidence of a signs of softening, then the admission that the economy has actually stopped growing,

but only temporarily Analysts, like Ian Harwood at Kleinwort Benson and Ge-rard Lyons at DKB, see it differently. They believe the Bundesbank, which meets today, will need - at some to cut the discount rate to a historic low of 2 per cent if it is to weaken the mark and revive German ex-ports. That will take time, however, allowing Mr Clarke to dress up domestically-nec-

Mutual anxiety

international initiative.

HERE is a temptation to see Alliance & Leices-ter's strategy in surrendering its mutual status as pandering to present fashion. To do so, however, would be unfair. Whether or not the society was an unsuccessful suitor for the National & Provincial, the fact that the Abbey National, once a build-ing society but now a bank with a stock market listing, was the successful bidder has clearly been influential.

One inescapable conclusion cision is that it leaves the Namutuality. If it, too, were to opt to tread the route mapped out by the likes of the Abbey National, the Halifax, the Leeds, the Woolwich and now the Alliance & Leicester, ther the mutual movement would pearing off all but the most regional of maps.

Chancellor coins

the right spiel

That is worrying, Mutual societies do not make a stakeholder society, but are rather closer to it in ethos than a shareholder democracy based on either dogma-driven, cutprice privatisations or the free hand-outs from institutions heading for the market. The Alliance & Leicester may yet find that the market plays by tough rules. By vol-unteering to abandon its mu-

tual status it has effectively put itself in play. It can have no qualms if someone else makes its soon-to-be share-holders a better offer — and

lberia dilemma

EIL KINNOCK was always trapped between a rock and hard place over the Spanish government's request to be allowed to pump yet more cash into its chronic loss-maker, Iberia. The airline is Spain's flag carrier. To refuse to sanction

a government rescue of such a national symbol would have risked a tremendous Spanish

But to give the European Commission's blessing to a rescue was bound to provoke the wrath of those airlines. and their supporters, which have to operate without benefit of subsidy. Mr Kinnock has tried to es-

cape his predicament by compromising. The Spanish government will be allowed to provide a cash lifeline for Deria but hedged about with commercial conditions that, according to Mr Kinnock, mean the support does not amount to state aid, in the traditional sense. The storm of criticism from opponents of

state aid has duly broken. If, however, Mr Kinnock's commercial constraints someefficient, profitable operation capable of attracting investthe public purse, then, despite to claim considerable credit.

The auspices do not look good, however. Critics see Iberia as an arm of Spain's notoriously bureaucratic civil service. They reckon a fair slice of the last round of state intervention was spent on buying into South American airlines — investments which Mr Kinnock is now forcing Iberia to sell. Even under the shadow of bankstill calling for last year's jobs-cutting viability plan to

be renegotiated.
The Commission says it wants level runways for the EU's airlines but yesterday's decision will have done noth ing to convince the doubters. which, with its business clientele, might well be thought to fit pretty comfortably in a group with plc status.

It looks far more like a political fudge than the commercial investment it is touted as being.

The maverick Mr Row-

land, who founded Lonrho

some 35 years ago and remains a shareholder, has

been one of the UK's high-

The group's annual

report says Mr Rowland's basic salary was aug-

mented by expense pay-

ments — totalling £273,000 in his last five months with Lonrho — relating to the

cost of entertaining over-

According to the report,

other directors were given

est-paid executives for a

number of years.

Clarke rift with George widens

Larry Efficit

ITY suspicion of a rift over interest rates between the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, and Bank of England Governor, Eddie George, deepened yesterday when it tably the acceleration in the had its doubts about the first of the two base-rate reductions since the Budget.

Although Mr George supported the idea of the quarterpoint cut in mid-December, he warned that it "would not

be without its dangers". The Governor made it clear that he opposed the idea of a bigger cut in interest rates, even though Mr Clarke said the question was not whether rates should be cut, but by how much and that he was 'sympathetic" to those calling for a bigger reduction.

However, the minutes record that Mr Clarke was persuaded to limit the rate cut to 0.25 percentage points by his optimism for the economy, the patchy nature of recent economic data and evidence that the slowdown late last year had not been as marked as originally feared.

Analysts said the minutes from the December meeting suggested there was a lack of unanimity at the meeting held earlier this month, when rates were again cut by a quarter-point to 6.25 per cent. Details of the discussions at that meeting are not yet available, but the Governor has refused to back the decision. saying that those interested in his views will have to wait until the minutes are released

Mr George told the December meeting that the improved outlook for inflation rate.

John Palmer in Brussels and

HE European Commission president. Jacques Santer.

vesterday announced a twin-

track strategy to generate jobs and protect the timetable

for moving to monetary union

He called for a "confidence

pact" by trade unions, em-

ployers and national govern-

ments in the European Union

modelled on the German

plan disclosed this week — to

help bring down the 20 mil-lion level of unemployment.

"The persistence of very

high levels of unemployment

imperils the cohesion of our

society and undermines the

foundations of the European social model," Mr Santer fold

a special session of the Euro-

pean Parliament in Brussels.
"Increasingly, the fear of unemployment is sapping

confidence in the single cur-

rency. This fear is not justi-

fied. But we know there is a point at which these percep-

Alex Duval Smith in Paris

EC chief unveils his strategy

for jobs and single currency

- which he said would dip below the Government's 2.5 per cent target by 1997 — jus-tified his support for a modest

rate cut. But while the short-term the pound and the possibility that the economy would pick up anyway during 1996.

According to the minutes, he added that a higger cut than a quarter point would suggest that "the top priority were no longer the attain-ment of the inflation target. That could seriously damage the credibility of the mone tary framework".

David Walton, economist at Goldman Sachs, the US in-vestment bank, said: "Since these minutes, base rates have been cut by a further the remarks, it is clear that the Chancellor was the driv-ing force behind the second

"It is difficult to believe that the Governor could have been anything other than distinctly unenthusiastic about

Meanwhile, the decision by the Bundesbank to trim its per cent to 3.40 per cent renewed hopes that it would announce a further cut in its official discount rate from three per cent to 2.5 per cent when it meets today.

While most City economists said the Bundesbank was likely to wait for the January money supply figures before moving, some did not rule out an attempt to catch dealers by surprise in an attempt to lower the mark's exchange

stalled, trans-European infra

structure projects, small and

medium-sized companies and

increased research and devel-

opment. The money can be found thanks to underspend-

ing on agriculture and the

virtual disappearance of the

Some Commission experts

believe that an EU pact —

under which trade unions

increases and allow more flexi-

ble working practices while governments agreed to cut

payroll taxes — could create millions of extra jobs. The need for urgent action

was underlined in France

where the jobless total rose in

the last two months of 1995 to

EU food mountains.



Making a point . . . Lord Hanson in combative form yesterday

Hanson demerges his critics

HREE hecklers were thrown out of Hanson's annual shareholders' meeting at London's Barbican meeting at London's Deal washing yesterday after the conglom-erate's chairman, Lord Han-son, lost his patience with them following disturbances.

The meeting saw Lord Hanson — who on Tuesday an-nounced plans for the de-merger of his 211 billion empire into four separate companies — barracked by protesting shareholders.

son, Lord Hanson's son, was a tions from shareholders. 2,000 strong meeting. In all, yesterday driven to insist he had not been demoted elled at the £100,000 donation cocktail of business and following Tuesday's decision to split the conglomerate. Mr Hanson, corporate development director, will contime as a director of the rump building products busi-ness, which retains the name

Hanson, and is widely ex-pected to become its chief executive, replacing Derek Bon-ham, when Lord Hanson retires as chairman next year. The meeting's interruptions ranged from protests at the company's environmental He was not the only member of the Hanson family with directors were being retroubles in mind. Robert Hanelested without taking ques-

to the Conservative Party, the election of former Home Secretary Kenneth Baker as non-executive director, and any women to its board

Lord Hanson, aged 74, struggled to keep control of the meeting, and, growing increasingly annoyed, told one protester: "For God's sake, hut up ... what's your prob lem?"

When the protests continued, four security guards removed one protesters, to widespread applause from other shareholders in the

showbusiness, with the board and shareholders rubbing including former James Bond Roger Moore, who stars in the new Hanson TV commercial, snooker star Ray Reardon, and disc-jockey David Hamilton, a mainstay of Hanson's easy-listening radio station. Melody FM.

Also present were two Na-vajo Indians from Arizona, where Hanson's Peabody subsidiary has coal-mining operations, who asked Hanson to be more pollution-conscious

Rifkind rebuffed by firms over Social Chapter 'hypocrisy' claim

Tory attempt to nail Blair backfires, Simon Beavis and Sarah Ryle report

campaign against Labour hypocrisy into the foreign policy arena backfired yesterday when business leaders tol him they were more worried by the Government's eco-

In a speech to the ruling council of the CBI, the Foreign Secretary hit out at Tony Blair's stance on social Europe, saying it was "at best

AN attempt by Malcolm | Mr Blair described the Social Chapter as a set of principles But the event — unusually

under qualified majority votcurrendered on further issues later, he said. "It is no use Mr Blair say-

ing that a Labour government would judge each piece of leg-islation on its merits. Once he has accepted the Social Chapter ... he would be bound to accept any proposal supported by continental

"If he does not know that then he has not done his homework. If he does, he

should have admitted it." Mr Riflaind said. He urged Labour to jettison its commitment to social Rurone or face charges of "in-

consultation and equality in the CBI's North-west region the workplace brought in said companies were not finding they were suffering by being signed up to the Masstricht Treaty.

Alf Gooding of the Welsh CBI, who introduced himself as a lifelong Conservative, said he was more worried by the the plunging value of the pound and low wages and declared the country was "going down the tubes." He said: We're not investing and not

training people. It's frightening."

Meanwhile, a Gallup poll for DHL found that nearly two-thirds of UK manufacture ers thought a single currency would be bad for their firms, while 55 per cent said it would be harmful to the country — a move away from

Tiny's pay was £795,683 in final months at Lonrho

Lisa Buckingham

OUSTED tycoon Tlny Rowland was the high-est paid director of the Lonrho trading group in 1995 despite having been sacked without a penny just five months into the financial

Lonrho's annual report reveals that although Mr Rowland was not compensated when removed from boardroom office with the group, he still earned penses, during his final five months at the helm.

That was £180,000 more than chief executive Deiter Bock earned for the 12-month period, although it does represent a £761,197 reduction on Mr Rowland's remuneration package in 1994 which topped £1.55

up to £18,000 for company cars and private medical insurance The total cost of Lonrho's boardroom dropped from £8.3 million in 1994 — when

seas visitors.

£2.4 million was paid in compensation to departing executives - to £4.7 milmillion — or about £30,000 | lion last year.

TOURIST RATES - BANK SELLS France 7.44 Italy 2,360 Singapore 2.10 Germany 2.1800 Malta 0.54 South Africa 5.34 Spain 183.00 Hong Kong 11.44 New Zealand 2.20 Sweden 10.35 India 54.28 Norway 9.59 Switzerland 1.77 Turkey 90,100 Israel 4.72 Saudi Arabia 5.58 USA 1.4700

tions can make or unmake

the EU budget to belp finance out details of the pact.

the last two months or 1250 to over three million or 11.7 per cent, despite a government plan to get the long-term unemployed back to work. Official figures published yesterday showed that 57,000 more people joined the dole queues in November and December and forecasts that the accamid forecasts that the economic slowdown could boost unemployment to 122 per

Mr Santer will visit all EU Mr Santer wants to switch capitals to win support for a more than £1.4 billion within jobs summit in May to work

nomic record than the Social

dishonest". He was attacking a speech given by the Labour leader to the CBI last November when

and not law and said he would only endorse measures on their merits.

opened to the media — went awry when a series of dele-gates with subsidiaries on the continent played down the impact of the Social Chapter and one complained that the Mr Rifkind said that giving up the Government's opt-out of the Social Chapter would leave the country committed

consistency and hypocrisy".

But Joe Derek, chairman of

a previously neutral stance.

Outlook/ High street banking battle hots up



crease charges in other areas. The Consumers' Associa-

tion is also gloomy about the

long-term prospects for cus-tomers. In its latest Which?

survey, published today, it ac-knowledged that building

ocieties have sound reason

for wanting to convert to banks. It also conceded that

the windfall payouts for quali-

fying savers benefit consum-ers in the short term. But it

warned, "as building societ

ies disappear and banks take

over, savers may come a poor

which? says that building societies, especially smaller ones, have traditionally provided better returns, both on

than banks. But the building

societies are disappearing

and the banks are taking

over. "Savers may well find themselves coming a poor

second to shareholders.

Claims of benefits to savers don't add up," said Kate Scribbins, head of the Which?

Simon Everard, chairman of A&L, is looking forward to being liberated

A&L joins big league but customers may lose out

Pauline Springett

HE Alliance & Leices-ter's decision to opt may puzzle many of its existing customers. After all, it owns Girobank and, as far as the public is concerned. already carries on many banking activities.

But the change is funda-mental. As a deposit taker licensed by the Bank of England, A&L, chaired by Simon beit steadily expanding, list of high street banks headed by the likes of National Westminster and Barclays.

A&L's chief executive Peter White said yesterday the idea was to enter the superleague Liberated from the restrictions of building society ruies. A&L will have greater access to stockmarket funding. The new-look, larger organisation will be able to offer a wider range of prod-ucts to customers and should

The decision by a steady stream of building societies to abandon their mutual status and opt for a stock market flotation, plus in some cases banking status, is just one of the emerging trends.

The banks are retaliating

by expanding into savings, investments, pensions, life assurance and mortgage lend-ing. Insurers are also getting in on the act. The industry argues this is

good for consumers, whether an individual or company, be cause the increased competi tion should produce a greater variety of products and better customer service. Certainly, as far as the banks are concerned, it could be argued there have been some superficial changes which backs up this view. It is now unusual to have a current account which does not pay some interest, however meagre. But closer examination sug-

be able to benefit from econo-mies of scale.

A recent report by the Inde-pendent Banking Advisory Service said that complaint about Britain's high street banks leapt by a fifth last year to more than 18,000. Most complaints alleged dishonesty, incompetence and negligence by banks. But there were also disputes over perof support and fees and

> On top of that, there are signs that some of the newer customer-friendly developnts, such as the absence of bank charges on some current accounts might soon disappear. Late last year, Sir Nicholas

Goodison, as chairman of what was still TSB Group, warned that theree competition between banks could lead to the re-introduction of bank charges on current accounts. new entrants were concentrating on certain profitable gests the reality is less rosy, creased the pressure to in-

with some 20 million custom-

ers. It hopes to sell undated

versions of WordPerfect and

PerfectOffice for Windows 95

to its existing customer base

and interest WordPerfect's

55 million users in its graph-

Novell's takeover of Word-

ics software.

cessor market.

A thousand lose homes each week

NEARLY 1,000 families lost their homes each week last year, according to figures published yesterday by the Council of Mort-gage Lenders which showed

Repossessions increase to 49,410 in 1995 from 49,210 in 1994 — ending a four-year decline since they peaked at 75,540 in 1991. Adrian Coles, the council's director-general, said the figures "would have been lower had the Govern-ment not introduced the

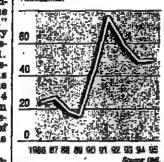
new housing benefit rules.' These reduced the safety net for unemployed homeowners from last October 1. The council was optimis-tic that repossessions coming year, given the 4 per cent fall, to 25,216, in the number of reposses-sions in the second half of 1995 compared with the

more than 12 months be-hind fell 27 per cent to The Lord Chancellor's Department reported separately that court orders granting lenders permission to evict borrowers fell in 1995 to 75,258 compared

arrears. The number of homeowners whose arrears

to 77,798 in 1994. Shadow housing minister Nick Raynsford said benefit cuts had contributed to the collapse in confidence in the housing market, com-

Repossessions Number of properties repo



opens up our market to a

much wider audience with, for example, dealers in the Far East and North America

being able to trade directly

Michael Bloomberg, the

president of Bloomberg news agency, said: 'This agree-

ment with Tradepoint further

demonstrates our commit-ment to provide additional functionality on the Bloom-berg terminal."

together on Tradepoint."

Ford's poor sales drive down profit

ROFITS at Ford, largest car maker, fell to \$4.1 billion (£2.7 billion) last year, a 22 per cent fall from a record \$5.3 billion in 1994 when it introduced several new models. A decline of 73 per cent in ing meant that only a sharp rise in profits from financial services prevented worse fig-ures being announced

yesterday.

In the fourfit quarter of 1995, Ford's profit tumbled 58 per cent to \$660 million. Profits from car operations nearly halved to \$2 billion in 1995 from \$3.9 billion in 1994, but financial services profits rose to \$2.1 billion from

\$1.4 billion. Chairman Alex Troiman said 1995 was the first time that Ford dealers sold more trucks than cars in the US. Ford does not break down results for the UK, where em-

are more than 10 per cent of their mortgage fell 16 per cent to 116,300 and those dispute, but said its car operaions in Europe earned \$116 million compared to \$128 million for 1994. Com-bined car and truck market share in Europe rose slightly to 12.3 per cent from 12.2 per

switch to new models of cars and trucks that make up about 35 per cent of sales volume in North America. These include updated versions of the Taurus and Escort, its two best selling cars, the F-150 pickup. America's best selling vehicle, and the Fiesta and Galaxy minivan in Europe.

Two of Germany's big carmakers — BMW and Mercedes-Benz — reported good
growth in sales in 1995 and
said that profits, to be unveiled next month, would also

show gains.

BMW said sales grew 9.4

per cent to DM-6.1 hillion
(£20.4 billion) in 1995, the first
full year in which Rover was
included in results, adding that there had been a "satis-factory" growth in profits. Sales excluding Rover grew 3.5 per cent to DM33.1 billion. The group sold 1.1 million ve-

hicles — just under half of which were Rover cars compared with 931,880 the vear hefore. The Mercedes-Benz chairloyees are involved in a pay-

Helmut Werner, said man, Helmut Werner, said sales had grown by 2 per cent in 1995 to around DM72 bil-lion and that profits were also up. But the group was re-ex-amining a DM13.5 billion. three-year investment plan and would only proceed with projects which promised high earnings and required the

News in brief

Rhône-Poulenc set for £1.3bn fire sale

FRENCH chemicals group Rhone-Poulenc plans to sell off assets worth 10 billion francs (21.3 billion) over the next two years. It aims to curb debt levels that have been augmented by its share of the acquisition cost of Fisons by its majority-owner offshoot, Rhône-Poulenc Rorer. Gearing has risen to 36 billion

francs — just over 70 per cent of shareholders' funds. Its chairman and chief executive, Jean-René Fourtou, said yesterday that the aim was to cut gearing back to around 50 per cent. The group's stake in the banking group, Société Générale valued at I.2 billion francs will be among the disposals, while another 5 billion francs is expected to come from sales in the

The group also revealed full-year net profits of 2.134 billion francs, up by 11 per cent on 1994. — Mark Milner

Airport delays cut

AVERAGE delays for UK flights have dropped from 14 minutes to four minutes since 1992, while air traffic delays in Europe have halved in that time, Transport Secretary Sir George Young amounced yesterday. He said the improvements resulted from efforts to reduce delays by the UK's National Air Traffic Service and from European intitatives to improve the proper carefully. and from European initiatives to increase airspace capacity.

Sir George told the parliamentary aerospace committee that the crisis days of the 1980s — when holidaymakers spent the first days of their holidays at UK airports waiting for flights — were

Halifax insurance switch

THE Haitfax Building Society has announced plans to launch a general incurance company which will sell a full range of personal and household insurance policies underwritten by Royal Insurance. From June 1 Halifax customers' buildings and contents insurance will switch to the Royal, with existing policies

transferred on renewal.

This business is worth more than £300 million annually to the Royal The move will come as a blow to Sun Alliance which handles £160 million of Halifax business a year. — Tereso Hunter

Novell sells WordPerfect | Bloomberg goes trading

Technology Editor

OVELL is selling Word-Perfect, one the world's leading makers of word processing software, for a fraction of the \$855 million (£570 million) it paid less than

two years ago.
America's global leader in networking software said yes-terday it was selling the bulk of WordPerfect for \$180 million to Corel, the Canadian company which dominates the graphics software business worldwide. The deal will make Ottawa-based Corel the largest software company after IBM and Microsoft.

the loss on the sale had been more than offset by the prowth in the value of the handful of WordPerfect products and technologies it was retaining. These include GroupWise, an e-mail and messaging software package, the canadian company claims between 70 and 80 per growth in the value of the

 The Guardian

Valentine Gift

PerfectWorks, a productivity | cent of the world market for tool, and Envoy, an electronic | graphic software packages, publishing product.

Novell agreed to buy Word-Perfect for \$1.4 billion in March 1994 but saw the value of the deal drop to \$855 million as its share price fell before completion.

Last November It put Word-Perfect up for sale to concen trate on its networking busi-ness. It has cut the WordPerfect workforce by a third to 1,300 and further jobs are expected to go.

Corel was founded in 1965 by Michael Cowpland, a British businessman who made a fortune co-founding, and ulti-mately selling, the Mitel telefor IBM and Microsoft.

A Novell spokesman said paying for WordPerfect with a package of equity, cash, roy-alty and licensing rights. No vell will become its second largest shareholder after Dr

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between lovers. We have

Valentine a gift book and

MBITIOUS plans to set up a global share mar-ket were unveiled yes-terday with a ground-breaking deal that could allow subscribers to the Bloomberg news agency to trade through London's Tradepoint stock

Perfect was described at the time as a marriage made in heaven. The relationship quickly deteriorated as rival exchange. The co-operation deal represents a huge expansion op-portunity for Tradepoint, Microsoft ate Into WordPerwhich set up in opposition to the Stock Exchange last year fect's share of the word pro- IBM has agreed to buy Tive with the modest ambition of oli Systems, a maker of net-work systems management

picking up 2 per cent of the London equity market. Tradepoint has attracted

just 60 institutional dealers | development with Bloomber since its inception. Linking | opens up our market to up with Bloomberg poten Hally allows share dealing to be carried out from anywhere in the world on Bloomberg's estimated 54.000 terminals Bloomberg will pay for the cost of developing the necessary software. Otherwise the deal involves no money being put up from either side. A

spokesman said that trading would be restricted to prop-erly authorised personnel. Reuters subscribers can al ready access Tradepoint through their screens, al-

to carry out transactions. Tradepoint director Stephen Wilson said: "This exciting

Underside

Pauline Springett

software, for \$743 million.

O Tom Bower's Hamp-stead residence for the launch of Maxwell: The Final Verdict, which may become a collectors item by the end of the week If the authorities clear the decks (and the book-shelves) for the "double-jeopardy" trial of Kevin Maxwell. Guests included Private Eye editor Ian History and His lop and MP Rupert Allason. Veterans of the Maxwell empire were also present former tax adviser Ron Woods and ex-press officer Bob Cole looked remarkably chipper, given their years of grappling with the "global publisher". So, too, did ex-Maxwell director Peter Laister, whose regrets centred more on his time as Thorn-EMI chairman than his period with Maxwell It seems Mr Laister had hoped to relaunch British film-making, but failed to carry his fellow directors. Just two films were produced during his time: Honky Tonk Freeway (1981) was a "disaster", but he balanced his record with A Passage to India (1984). As for Maxwell Communication Corporation, that firm, he says, could have been saved. There was just one problem: Robert Maxwell.

WO final observations from the Bower gathering. First, Robert Maxwell's name — scrubbed from seemingly every business ever linked with the great man — does survive. His former private secre-

tary, Jean Baddeley, is talk of her behaviour folapparently involved in pro-ducing a directory, Maxi-mov, in eastern Europe where the handle retains some cachet. Meanwhile. Bob Cole continues to serve his life sentence at what was the printer, BPC. His

the next century. THE efforts of estate agents desperate to revive interest in the property market become ever more bizarre. Keith ing a "stucco-fronted Regency house in Chester Row, Belgravia, SW1". This unfurnished des res is available for rent at £1,200a-week. It may, suggests the press release, appeal to "those seeking literary inspiration" — for it is the childhood family home of poet and playwright, TS E-liot. Helpful notes tell us that Eliot was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature and his wife Vivienne

job today? Press officer for MCC's administrators, a

job that could stretch into

HE KEEPS FORGETTING HIS TUBE PASS

Haigh-Wood was eventu-

ally certified as insane. De-

low, including an occasion where she poured a soup tureen filled with melted ter box of publishers. Faber and Faber, in Russell Square, W1, where Eliot was a director.

NDERSIDE is cheered

to note that the for-mer Guiness chief, Ergotten how to live life to the full. Spotted recently leaving The Pence, a Clerken-well wine bar frequented by dealers from Merrill Lynch, Mr Saunders pootled off in the direction of Farringdon tube station, only to slide into a chauffeur-driven, dark-blue Roller waiting outside. Any clues as to Ernie's fellowimbiber (and, of course, what they were talking about) gratefully received.

PERFECT timing or what? City law firm Denton Hall is holding a seminar next week to dis cuss "the future for fraud prosecution in the UK". The seminar was organised before last week's decision by the Serious Fraud Office to launch a second prosecution over the collapse of the Maxwell empire. It will fea-ture John Wood, formerly head of the SFO, and now consultant at Denton Hall, who will "speak on some of the problems facing fraud prosectors, give his thoughts on aspects of the Maxwell trial and suggest some ways forward". Denton Hall says the event will going to be in the nature of a provocative examination of the history of the prose cution for fraud," said a

spokesman for the firm.

A new Motorola phone with change from one pound.

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Odolphin

araback run for 🖸

United Leeds suffer split

EEDS's football manager Hugh McGahan is worried about his players becoming in-volved in rugby all the year round after the "marriage" of the city's league and union

He will seek urgent talks with the rugby union club, who will play at Headingley from next season, to thrash out the problem.

On Tuesday Dennis Green-wood, the rugby league club's chairman, said there would be no objection to players switching to union in the win-ter. Indeed he welcomed it. However, it would appear that he had not consulted either Leeds's football maniger or coach before he aired

Bell, Leeds's coach, was far from happy at the prospect of his players turning out 52

rest and to get over niggling injuries," said McGahan. "If players played rugby league in the summer and union in the winter they would have no time at all to recuperate and to build up for the following season. That would most certainly affect their

"Rugby league is regarded as the toughest contact sport is the world and it is going to be even tougher when Super League is launched in March.

"We are desperately keen to challenge the might of Wigan

that if most of our players are tired because of playing rugby all the year round."
Maurice Lindsay, the
Rugby Football League's chief

executive, endorsed McGa-han's view. "The RFL and the British Medical Association are concerned at the prospect of players playing 52 weeks of the year. We believe that the welfare of the players is para-mount, and that surely can-not be helped by all-the-year-round rushs."

the 31-year-old Warrington and former Great Britain winger, has been included in the Ireland squad for the Fiji nines tournament next week.
James Lowes, the Leeds
hooker, and Bernard Dwyer,
the Bradford Bulls hooker or back-row forward, are also in contention for places.

Highfield, who have been told to improve their performances or risk losing their place in the Second Division, have appointed Jim Crellin, eeks a year.

52, as manager. He is an experienced coach but has been out of the game for more than three years since leaving

The club have also appointed Alex Melling, the 31-year-old former Swinton and Rochdale hooker, as playercoach. He is currently playing for the amateur club Oldham Highfield's player-manager during the Centenary season, will be invited to stay at the

Workington Town's fourthround Challenge Cup tie with Widnes was postponed last night and will now be played



Comeback run for Gunnell

SALLY GUNNELL returns women's team captain, who to the track this weekend to run her first British race title in Gothenburg last year for nearly 18 months. The Olympic 400 metres hurdles champion has entered the two-day AAA Indoor Championships in Birmingham, where she joins a 400m field which includes the European | also run at the Ricoh Tour In-

title in Gothenburg last year because of a beel injury which later needed surgery. Gunnell, whose last domes

tic appearance was in the World Cup meeting at Crystal Palace in September 1994 will It will be a useful pre-Olympic test of the fitness against her old hurdles rival and sharpness of the British Sandra Farmer-Patrick.



Back in his stride . . . Magic Johnson on his successful return for Los Angeles Lakers

Basketball

Magic conjures up his glorious past

lan Katz on a night of hoop dreams for supporters in Los Angeles and Houston

NYONE flicking on an | though, were somewhat American television | higher. When Johnson set for Tuesday night's NBA double-header could have been forgiven for wondering if they had been caught in a time warp.

From 8pm to 10.30 fans were treated to Michael Jordan's rampant Chicago Bulls theirs on the Houston Book.

taking on the Houston Rockets. For the next 2½ hours they could savour Magic Johnson's Lakers doing battle

with Golden State. The glori-ous Eighties, all over again. Never mind that the Bulls' victory over the reigning champions improved their re-cord to 39 wins and only three defeats, equalling an NBA re-cord for flying starts; it was always going to be Magic's

night.
The permanently grinning former Lakers star, idohsed by a generation of basketball fans, was back for his first game since retiring from the sport 4 by years ago after learning that he had con-tracted the HIV virus. At 36, be was the oldest

player on the court and the ninth oldest in the NBA. He was 27 lb heavier, several paces slower and a good deal jowlier than the old Magic. And instead of the glamorous point-guard position from which he led the Lakers to five NBA championships in the 1980s, he played up front

with the big men.
But none of that mattered.
American sports fans love nothing more than a come-back, and a good deal of them loved no one more than Earvin "Magic" Johnson. They used to call his games Showtime. The comeback was billed as The Lake Show.

For once Los Angeles's no-toriously fair-weather fans filled the Great West Forum where Johnson's No. 32 vest hangs on the wall alongside those of Kareem Abdul-Jab-bar and Wilt Chamberlain. For once they were in their seats before tip-off.

"I don't expect a whole lot," a visibly nervy Johnson said before the game. "I just want to get into the game, smell the somebody and then I'll know checked into the game after a little more than two minutes' play they made a noise which has not been heard at the

SPORTS NEWS 13

Forum for many years.
Though he missed his first basket attempt and looked ex-bausted after lumbering up and down the court a few times. Magic did not

disappoint.

He scored his first bisket with a trademark left-handed hook shot, dribbled the length of the court for a dunk, then wrong-footed Golden State's

onship contenders.

Johnson's first attempted when several players worried aloud about the risk of contracting HIV on the court. The players are now more supportive as NBA officials have gone to some lengths to reassure them that the risk of infection

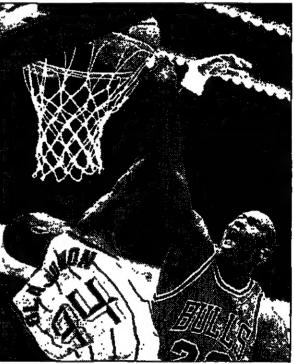
If anything, Johnson's Golden State opponents seemed more in one at sharing a court with their child-hood idol than worried about contracting the Aids virus.

Warriors' rookie star Joe Smith was four years old when Johnson scored 42 points against the Philadel-phia 76ers to clinch the championship in 1980. He had a poster of Magic on his wall. "I tried to do whatever he did." Johnson finished with 19

points, 10 assists, and eight rebounds — only two rebounds short of a coveted so-called "triple double" — in the Lakers' 10-point victory

In Houston the other MJ, half a season into his own comeback, had a horrible Latrell Sprewell with a night, He scored 22 points in dummy pass so sweet that the win-some-lose-some Lakers suddenly looked like champia positive drought by the

If more than a few basketball fans and TV executives suspected on Wednesday gone to heaven, tomorrow night's fixture list will stretch their credibity further. It fea-tures Jordan's Bulls against Magic's Lakers. Tickets are already going for \$1,000.



The fans' expectations, Raging Bull . . . Jordan's slam dunk attempt is blocked

Racing

Godolphin plan spring start

Ron Cox

LTHOUGH still in the grip of winter, Newmar-ket takes a tentative step towards spring with the official opening of the Warren

Hill grass gallop today.

It is a time of anticipation perhaps, for several local trainers, trepidation as prepa-rations get under way for the arrival of the Godolphin horses from Dubai. Sheikh Mohammed's hand-

picked team is again expected to operate from Moulton Paddocks. Formerly an overflow yard used by John Gosden, it has undergone renovations during the winter.

Details of this year's Godol-phin contingent have not yet been finalised, but I gather it contingent have not yet paign and from such a wealth contingent have not yet paign and from such a wealth finalised, but I gather it of equine talent one or two include more two-year new stars are sure to emerge.

operation in full swing by the Craven Meeting in April. Under nominated trainer

Saeed Bin Suroor, the Godolphin horses enjoyed a remarkable run of Group-race victories last year, spearheaded by Lammtarra.

Sheikh Mohammed, obviously keen to build on this success, has recruited New Yorker Tom Albertrani from his United States trainer Bill Mott to replace Jeremy No-seda. Already making his presence felt in Dubai, Alber-

trani is likely to prove a vital cog in the Godolphin set-up. Everything points to an-other hugely successful cam-

olds. An earlier start than last season is also planned, and it be hearing plenty about is day's Hennesay Gold Cup at will be no surprise to see the Earth Shaker, who is a half-leopardstown.

brother to Lammtarra. He was highly regarded by Michael Stoute last year, but owing to niggling problems never ran. Hopefully, his spell in the Dubai sunshine will en-

able him to fulfil his Helicon, Mark Of Esteem, Don Micheletto, Mick's Love, Pricket and Shawanni, all two-year-old winners capable of big improvement with a Gulf winter behind them, form the basis of another powerful Godolphin assault on the Classics.

A lot of top class jump rac-ing will be decided before then, and yesterday Richard Dunwoody came to an impor-

Despite that news, Ladbrokes eased Flashing Steel to 5-1 from 9-2 and clipped Imperial Call a point to 4-1. Master Oats hardened as favourite. into 7-4 from 2-1.
Aintree will be able to guar-

March 30 Martell Grand National, as four reserves are to be announced from those horses not among the 40 weighted highest at the 48hour declaration stage.

Ray Cochrane was fined £200 by the stewards at Wolverhampton yesterday for failing to hold his draw to the

marker pole on Mystic

Tempo, winner of the Marjo-ram Selling Stakes. This was

Cochrane's third such offence

106 8065-18 LEFT BOY (12) (C) (D) A Moore 7-8-5 106 0455-00 THORRY BESIND (7) (CD) J Bridger 5-8-3 TOP FORM TIPS; Hard To Figure 8, Inherent Bagin 6 1896: Tyrkim Parple 7 8 5 D Harrison 13-2 (T J Manghina) 7 mm FORM GUIDS - MARD TO PROLISE. Very useful synther at Seel, not seen set alson Avy Gold Cup weer ridden halfway, rza on extrangly, ich of 23, bin 51 to Royal Reprine (Avy 61, Gol). STAR TAULETT: he'd up, beadway halfway, ied over 11 cut, won by shind from Perilous Pright (Linguisti 7). Std). Indicates THACAC: Scoriy away, roor until steyed on Anal Autong, 3rd, bin 25t to LFT 90Y (roc 11lps, te Ingide Sng) lyrtong, ran on (Lingfield St, Std). AMEZIO Prominent until weakened over 11 cost, 10th of 16, btn 71 to Rakus (Lingsleid 71, Std). LIFT BOY: Petitien over 11 cus, 5th, btn 38 by Miles (Lingsleid 65, Std).

2.2	O ALBERTA SELLING HARDICAP 1m St 12,206	
101	06354-2 WILL FARM DANCER (T) W Brisbourns 5-9-10	
202	1560-20 CAPTAIN MARKALADE (19) (C) () Thom 7-8-8	Tate 11±
100	0016-40 ROSE OF CLEDIN (20) (C) B Parker 5-8-6	R Cockrane 5
104	362-064 NEIGHTH OF FAME (14) A J Wilson 5-9-5	Fertime 1
105	P/06P-0 QUADRANT (\$4) (C) A Moore 7-9-5	A Clark 4
106	50000-6 WHITE HEAT (7) W Turner 4-8-6	C Admitton (ID 2
107	0000- JMR80 (228) J Jaskins 5-5-4	
108	6/56-52 NORTHERN TRIAL (8) K Burks 8-8-3	T Arbier (7) 15 o
109	06/014- COMMANCHERO (563) R Hodges 9-8-13	S Dreame (3) 3
10	006-510 SORESKY (19) (CD) B Gabby 4-8-12	J Outen 12
11	0445-22 BRITAK (141 (SF) P Makin 4-8-9	S. Sanders 7
12	04-4650 SNYMPORD FLYER (5) J A Herrie 7-8-8	Dale Olivera 10
13	040-044 FOOLS OF PRIDE (8) R Holmshead 4-8-8	F1 meh (7) 16
14	GOL-OD SHEDANSAR (23) G L Moore 4-8-3	
15	D/S/10-0 EMSTER LAWSON (20) (C) B Smart 10-8-1	A Markey 6
16	DOD-0 PERCUSSION BIRD (14) J Poution 4-8-0	T Field (7) 34
17	856-358 DUGGAN (8) P Evans 9-7-12	F Horton 9
48	0/0300-0 YERRO (12) K Bishop 9-7-10	
	ORM TIPS: Mittal 8, Northern Trist 7, Hill Farm Dancer 6	
	Density Dissected 5 to 0 S Sanders 5-1 (Siles & Sectors) 10 mm	
	gs 11-2 Northern Trau, 6-1 Militals, 7-1 Hill Farm Dancer, Captein Martin v. 13-1 Roan Ol Glassa, Footh Ol Pride, 14-1 Stedansar	slade, Heighth Of Farre 5-1

FORM GURDE - HELL FARM DANCERS Ridden over 17 out, ran on, \$12nd of 14 to Carrolla Marc (Linefield FORME GUIZING - HILL, FARME DARK-MER PRODUCT OWN 17 CUT, CAR CUT, 24 CUT OF AN DISTRIBUTION OF AN EXECUTION OF

2.50 MARITORA HANDICAP 124 47 CS/438 201 S244-34 PRINCE DARKEN (18) (20) D Marray S 202 11253-5 PRODRESSION (9) (D) C Marray 5-9-3 203 2100/ID- CONIC REL (248) J Pearce 5-8-10 — 204 105-00 CROSS TALK (3) R Molleshed 4-8-8 44604- LET'S GET LOST (82) J A Karris 7-8-3 306 S01305 - COURBARIL (128) (D) S Dow 4-8-2 307 011-340 RED SPECTACLE (14) (D) P Hankin

1988: Art Porm 8 10 3 T hes 4-5 (C A Cyzar) 7 ran

Bettings 6-4 Progression, 5-2 Prince Danitry, 11-2 Courbani, 13-2 Let's Get Lost, 8-1 Red Speciaris, 29-1 Cross Talk, Conic Hill 7 response. FORDI CUIDE - PRINCE DANCICE Ellert 31 out, not pace to challange, dat et 4, bin 551 to Magic Junci Moderfanzaion 1m2, Skill Conject in the Sci.

Consect i Spectraveol finds, Spir) Spectraveol finds, Spir) SED SPIECTACLES Land readed 61 out, westerned 45 oot, but 69 to Maghidael (Lungsfeld timet, Clid). SED SPIECTACLES Land readed 61 out, westerned 45 oot, but 69 bits (Spir Norman Holf (Lungsfeld 2m., Stot).

3.20 QUESTO BARRIO STAKES SYO IN CLAIS 200-22 BLUE FLYER (21) R ingram 8-0

0-5 CRYSTAL PAST (23) P Kodeway 8-0

40- LANCASHER LEGIBD (124) S Dow 9-0

40- LANCASHER LEGIBD (124) S Dow 9-0

00-22 BAWII (7) (89) W Mar 9-0

0- BLURGERIPT FIRLDS (149) C Wall 8-8

40-6 CONQUESTALADE (12) S Woods 8-8

8- NATIVE SORE, 4-6) M Hyros 8-3

3-4 MOTH OF CAUTION (22) (8F) Lord Hardes 1995: Perintre 3 9 0 B Doyle 13-6 (C E Brittain) 5 ram Bettings 13-8 Blue Flygr, 7-2 Note Of Couling. 4-1 Lanca Blueberry Fields, Crystal Fast, 25-1 Netwe Song FORM CUIDS - \$1,05 FLYIDs Lac over 41 and, rigides Goal 21, rap on, is

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Lingfield (A	II-weather Fl	at) with form
1.50 Hard To Figure 2.20 Stedantar 2.50 PROGRESSION (mip)	3.20 like Flyer 8.50 Geneder 4.20 lik Frosty	3.50 NEWFOUNDLAND NANDRCAP I.m 21 C2,586 501 502-413 ROBELLION (14) (C) D Artschnot 5-10-0 502 6541(2-1 EXPLOSIVE POWER (21) (CD) G Bravery 5-9-12 Thes 7 503 503-51 TODO (14) (CD) P Microl 5-9-0 A Clark 11 504 503-78 LARUDO (12) CG (507 R brawn 6-4-8 B Blees 8
Cologo Standard. + Descrise Milistore. Dr. Figures in brackets after berse's since of Jeclapst & Piscopols All air spees. 1 - 50 ERTISH COLUMBIA CLAMBIN 101 070505- HARD TO PRISING (128)	imoto singu since latest calling.	So6 205-61 YOUR MOST WELCOME (140) (CD) D Hront Devel 5-9-4 G Carter 12 366 504-700 MACS TAXX (42) (CD) P Hallont 4-8-1-1 J Fortune 8 507 6206-3 GARADOR (14) B Smart 4-8-11 S Essaders 3 3202- SMRLKY FACE (275) R Hodges 4-9-11 D Presume (3) B 509 6207-4 SWRLKY FACE (275) R Hodges 4-9-11 D Presume (3) B 509 6207-4 SWRLKY FACE (275) R Hodges 4-9-11 D Presume (3) B 119-201 REAL MADRID (7) (GB sq) (GD) G Engint 5-9-7 N Adms 1 w 3-15 5-9-8 119-201 REAL MADRID (7) (GB sq) (GD) G Engint 5-9-7 A Gallen 4 w 3-15 5-9-8 J Gallen 4 w 3
102 04:50-1 STARTALENT (21) (C) (108 (108:-3 IMMERSIAT MAGIC (21) (104 44:8-0) AMERIC (12) (C) (D) 8 Per 105 808:-18 LEFT BOY (12) (C) (D) A	D) Gey Kolessey 5-8-5 T Aub (C) (287) W Mur 7-8-2 J Wes (T) 1879 W Mur 7-8-2 J Wes (T) 1870 W Mur 7-8-2 J Wes (T) 1870 W Mur 7-8-5 J Mur 7	## COSC-CO AL SHAATT (12) (C) R O Sulfrage 6-6-5 ## Corridad 24* ### 12 (COSC-O AL SHAATT (12) (C) R O Sulfrage 6-6-5 ## Corridad 24* ### 12 (COSC-O AL SHAATT (12) (C) R O Sulfrage 6-6-5 ## Corridad 24* ### 12 (COSC-O AL SHAATT (12) (C) R O Sulfrage 6-6-5 ## Corridad 24* ### 12 (COSC-O AL SHAATT (12) (C) R O Sulfrage 6-6-5 ## Corridad 24* ### 12 (COSC-O AL SHAATT (12) (C) R O Sulfrage 6-6-5 ## Corridad 24* ### 12 (COSC-O AL SHAATT (12) (C) R O Sulfrage 6-6-5 ## Corridad 24* ### 12 (COSC-O AL SHAATT (12) (C) R O Sulfrage 6-6-5 ## Corridad 24* ### 12 (COSC-O AL SHAATT (12) (C) R O Sulfrage 6-6-5 ## Corridad 24* ### 12 (COSC-O AL SHAATT (12) (C) R O Sulfrage 6-6-5 ## Corridad 24* ### 12 (COSC-O AL SHAATT (12) (C) R O Sulfrage 6-6-5 ## Corridad 24* ### 12 (COSC-O AL SHAATT (12) (C) R O Sulfrage 6-6-5 ## Corridad 24* ### 12 (COSC-O AL SHAATT (12) (C) R O Sulfrage 6-6-5 ## Corridad 24* ### 12 (COSC-O AL SHAATT (12) (C) R O Sulfrage 6-6-5 ## Corridad 24* ### 12 (COSC-O AL SHAATT (12) (C) R O Sulfrage 6-6-5 ## Corridad 24* ### 12 (COSC-O AL SHAATT (12) (C) R O Sulfrage 6-6-5 ## Corridad 24* ### 12 (COSC-O AL SHAATT (12) (C) R O Sulfrage 6-6-5 ## Corridad 24* ### 12 (COSC-O AL SHAATT (12) (C) R O Sulfrage 6-6-5 ## Corridad 24* ### 12 (COSC-O AL SHAATT (12) (C) R O Sulfrage 6-6-5 ## Corridad 24* ### 12 (COSC-O AL SHAATT (12) (C) R O Sulfrage 6-6-5 ## Corridad 24* ### 12 (COSC-O AL SHAATT (12) (C) R O Sulfrage 6-6-5 ## Corridad 24* ### 12 (COSC-O AL SHAATT (12) (C) R O Sulfrage 6-6-5 ## Corridad 24* ### 12 (COSC-O AL SHAATT (12) (C) R O Sulfrage 6-6-5 ## Corridad 24* ### 12 (COSC-O AL SHAATT (12) (C) R O Sulfrage 6-6-5 ## Corridad 24* ### 12 (COSC-O AL SHAATT (12) (C) R O Sulfrage 6-6-5 ## Corridad 24* ### 12 (COSC-O AL SHAATT (12) (C) R O Sulfrage 6-6-5 ## Corridad 24* ### 12 (COSC-O AL SHAATT (12) (C) R O Sulfrage 6-6-5 ## Corridad 24* ### 12 (COSC-O AL SHAATT (12) (C) R O Sulfrage 6-6-5 ## Corridad 24* ### 12 (COSC-O AL SHAATT (12) (C) R O Sulfrage 6-6-5 ## Corridad 24* ### 12 (COSC-O AL SH

Betting: 4-1 Explosive Poser: 9-2 Todd, 5-1 Your Most Wolcome, 7-1 Labud5 Real Madrid 9-1 Roterhen, 5-1 Gand Str. 14-1 Supel Alternation Mar's Year PORM CUIDDE - ROBELLIONE ENAY PORT 20 off, one page 3rd oth 32 bild Statung, with MAC 5 TAY myc 1800 12 sear th numbers 71 5xl 1 and 1800 12 sear th numbers 71 5xl 1 and 1800 12 sear th numbers 1 5xl 1 and 1800 12 sear th numbers 1 maybe to the 1 status of maybe to the 1 status of the 1 sear that 1 and 1800 12 sear Tunglers (m.). Star MAC'S TAXE Les II, weakened over 27 out, list of 16, bin 18 to Rajos , Lingfield 71 Star REAL MADRIDY Les Stout, rais on well ander pressure, som by the born Unimary Waths, fungle

4.2	O ONTARIO AMATEUR RIDERS' HANDICAP 1m EZ,PES	
801 602	1-0:323 FOUR OF SPADES (2) (C) P Evans 5-11-7	A Brees (5) E o Diny James (5) D4
803 804 806	(0-33)- MR PROSTY (70) (C) W Jerns 4-11-2	.J Durkon 9 A Events (5) 10: A Holdsworth (2
806	50554-0 DRIEAM CARRIER (22) R Poisott 6-10-2	Mrs C Pescock
807	4045-0 LONE LEGEND (27) (C) D Artestant (1-9-1)	(5) 12 Mrs D Arbethne
406 609 810	2353-1 MONTONE (12) J. JANINS 6-9-10 2-40-30- HOLIDAY ISLAID (283) (C) (D) P Butler 7-9-2 ANET-4 JOH'S CHOICE (27) B Preess 6-9-7	. M Manusch 6 J Goldstein (5) 1 Wise L Bourell
611	25000- ROYAL ACCLAIM (186) (C) (D) J Bradley 11-9-5	(5) 4 Miss E Pest (5)
612	DECIGE MACRO LEADER (99) T Clement 4-9-0	11± V Lukenhir 2
TOP F	ORM TIPS: Mr Frosty 8, Diggest 7, Four Of Species 5	
	Ballian Britan and an area and area area.	

Setting: 11-4 Dignant, 7-2 Mr Front, 5-1 Four Of Spates, 8-1 Jone Choop 10-1 Beet Apr Secret. Morton: 12-1 Decam Certer, Love Legend 12 research. PORTE CURDS - FROM OF SPADENS Chased Inadeus, legioner If out headed made use by 125 bin 12 by Ruins (Imgled 7, 13th). Behand here on Tuesday. Behand the second of the second seco JOHPS CHOICE: Led 3) out, headed well made heal ferlong, 4th of 15, bon 24 to Kompanier i South

• Towcester has been frozen off today, but Sedgefield are hopeful of passing an early morning inspection. Kelso, due to race tomorrow, inspect this morning, though prospects appear poor. No inspection is planned at Folkestone, due to stage tomorrow's other turf fixture.

● Blinkered today for the first time: SEDGEFIELD: 1.10 Grate Deel. LINGFIELD: 2.20 Captain Marmalade; 3.20 Rawi, Conquistajade.

Results

CHRIS HAWKINS, compiler of yesterday's Guardian selections, gave four winners at Wolverhampton, including the 13-2 nap Weetman's

WOLVERHAMPTON WILLYERRAMPTON
2.10 (77): 1, SERBOUS PACT, G Duffold
(5-1). 2, Woolverstone Half (35-1). 3,
Lady Mach (9-2 lav). 12 ran. 5, 36 ra
Prescot) Tota: C5 10: C2.30, C2.90, C2.90, C2.90,
Dual F: C165.60 CSF- C129.84. Tricast:
C728.85.
2.40 (67): 1, PRINCILA BARRN, Alex
Growts (7-1). 2, King Rumbo (15-6 fav):
3, San-Deer (9-4) 8 ran. 15, 28, (0 Michols) Tota: 17,90, C1.50, C1.10, C1.50 Dual
F- C12.30, CSF- C19.37.
3.10 (1m 17 79)(40): 1, FREID OF VI.

F- E12.30. CSF- E19.37.
3-10 (1m 17 Toyde): 1, FIELD OF VI-SION, J Weaver (11-2). 2. Knowee): Weaver (12-1): 3, South Eastern Fried (8-1).
7-2 fay Ocean Park. 12 ran. 1, 24, 6M Johnston) Toto 67, 10, E1, 10, E3, 10, E4, 80, Duel F-U7-30. CSF- E68.73. Frecast £496.07.
3-40 (81): 1, WEATERAN'S WEIGH, L Det-tor! [13-2]: 2, House Coff Express (10-1);

3. Mythons Mistake (7-11) 9-4 lay Princely Sound 9 ron. V. nk. (R Hollinshead) Yous Sound 9 ron. V. nk. (R Hollinshead) Yous Sound 9 ron. V. nk. (R 23.04 Tro. 117.60 4.10 (67) 1, MYSTIC TEMPO, R Cochrane (overs tau): 2, Boffy (4-11), 3, Dhos-C (12-1), 11 ron. V. (1) Scargill Tote 17.70. If 10, E1.50, E2.30 Dual F 14.50, CSF 16.53, 4-40 (1m 4): 7, BEAUMONT, R Cochrane (4-1); 2, Montalsa, anythin (5-1): 3, Wooderful Day (7-2 lay). 10 ron. 8, K (1) Bankel Tote: 24.30, C170 11.90 (2.00 Dual F 12.17), CSF: E24.84. Tricars 177.86

JACKPOTT Not won; E7.254.80 carried forward to Linguist today

QUADPOTI \$24.80. PLACEPOTI 190.7.0.



Sedgefield runners and riders

53-322 ALY DALEY (26) J Howard Johnson 8-1 2500-P RUSHING ALONS (16) F Murphy 7-11-2

2.10 Stop The Walter (sh) 3.40 Highland Way	
4.10 Listo	
The state of the s	In reference.
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RESTRY Union

Bdigs

Robert Arms (14194)

Premiership: West Ham United 3, Coventry City 2

Dowie powers in as home banker

Martin Thorpe

HE increasingly cos-mopolitan West Ham United finally proved there is no place like home last night when they ended a dismal run of four straight league defeats by beating their fellow relegation strugglers Coventry.

seemed Whelan had rescued a point for the visitors with a goal eight minutes from time, but then the Coventry defence stood watching as Dowie bundled his way through the area to slot home the winner, much to the relief

Perhaps in an attempt to be top of at least one league — the league of nations — West Ham are close to signing their 10th non-British player, the 18-year-old Portuguese striker

So far the name Dani has been better known for its association with showbiz But Snr Carvalho is ready to change that, a striker billed as the best young player in Portugal and one West Ham hope to take on loan until the end of the season, no doubt sparking a spate of Dani Boy

Actually the Hammers only had two of their foreign le-gion starting last night's game — Miklosko and Rieper

mitrescu is due to make his debut on Saturday and the £1.6 million defender Bilic is hoping to get a work permit in time to start against Spurs in a fortnight.

Their manager Harry Redknapp is unapologetic at the overseas invasion, arguing that he cannot afford the prices of comparable home talent in his urgent quest to tion near the bottom of the Premiership.
Coventry, who started the

game one place below West Ham in the table, fourth from bottom, are generally regarded as a side whose parts are better than the sum. None of those were foreign parts in last night's starting line-up, despite there being six non-British players on Coventry's books. And that did not include Ogrlzovic,

born in Mansfield. The goalkeeper was unable to feel at home last night as West Ham camped in the Cov-entry half before the break. Hughes, Dicks and Dowie all went close, the latter forcing a fine save from Ogrizovic. However, the Hammers'

closest chance came from the Coventry player Telfer, who sliced an intended clearance from Hughes's cross just

wide.
Perhaps inevitably it was one of the foreigners in the

deadlock — Rieper. And, yes, it was grim for Ogrizovic.

ing West Ham players he dropped the ball from Hughes's corner allowing the Dane to hit home. The big goalkeeper pleaded he had been fouled but to no avail.

That was just 63 seconds into the new half. Twelve minutes later Rieper hit the post with a header as West Ham searched for a second goal, which they found after another two minutes.

Bishop brilliantly put Cottee through on goal, Ogrizovic came out, missed, and the lit-tle striker, despite being under presure from Shaw, did well to lift the ball over the defender on the line.

Then, with their first real attack of the game, Coventry equalised three minutes later when Dublin bundled Whe-

 Nigel Spink last night com pleted a free-transfer move to West Bromwich Alblon after 37-year-old goalkeeper has signed a 21/2-year contract at The Hawthorns and is set to



Check, mate . . . West Ham's Danny Williamson and Coventry's Marcus Hall do battle for the ball at Upton Park last night

Nottingham Forest 2, Leeds United 1

Roy hits the right spot

David Hopps

OTTINGHAM Forest's been one of the least success-ful aspects of another impressive season, but a goal aplece accounted for Leeds United at the City Ground last night as Forest stretched their un-beaten home record past the

Leeds were composed, fleetingly even fluent, but there was no doubt whose midfield ssessed the greater bite. Forest, excellently led by the nearly every meaningful challenge in that area and posed

In Leeds' inconsistent season. Speed has been more infurlating than most — a player whose stature is of rather more consequence than his influence. His dally-ing on the left edge of Leeds' area after 10 minutes fell prey to Genmill's tenacious tackle and Campbell rammed the through, a slight lapse in con-

yesterday as the wheels began to fall off Faustino Asprilla's pro-posed £6.7 million transfer

from Parma to Newcastle.

The question last night

was not whether the striker

was fit enough to make the

to make the move, but

whether Newcastle still

wished to buy one of the world's most controversial

Yesterday Asprilla, at

home in Colombia, awaited developments as the New-

castle hierarchy debated his future. But after a long

meeting, directors declined

Asprilla's proposed transfer from Parma of

Italy had become doubtful late on Tuesday night when

word began to filter out of Newcastle that the deal was

to comment. Asprilla's

Beeney's left-hand post. Beeney was at full stretch

to push Woan's 30-yard first-choice striking around the same post minutes partnership, Bryan Roy later after Leeds' midfield allowed him an inviting amount of time to steady him-

Wallace's brightness gave Leeds occasional hope and. Brolin, he eluded both Cooper and the goalkeeper Crossley only for the ball to run harmlessly out of play.
But Campbell's goal for For-

est, seven minutes before half-time, possessed precisely the clinical quality that, in the absence of Yeboah, Leeds lacked. Receiving the ball from Gemmill in a central position, Campbell side-stepped conviction from just outside

Forest should have ex tended that lead twice early in the second half. Woan, an increasingly rounded player on Forest's left, swung a mag-Roy and, when Lyttle surged

Ian Ross on Newcastle's puzzling Colombian connection

Asprilla doubts growing

supply all the player's med-

ical documents after it was revealed that he had not fully recovered from a seri-

ous knee injury five years

Asprilla, though, claims be is in good health and yesterday Parma continued

to insist that the deal had

been done. Indeed, it is believed the

clubs reached some form of

written agreement 10 days ago when Newcastle's man-

ager Kevin Keegan visited Rome, but Asprilla has yet

to sign a formal contract, despite his brief visit to

Tyneside last Friday. And — most significantly — no

money has yet changed

If Keegan still wants to

sign Asprilla, he may have

to persuade Parma to accept a lower price or take

trol allowed Beeney to save. Woan's looping header then struck the bar.

fortune and they found it in Palmer's equaliser in the 53rd minute. As McAllister's corner fell to his feet four yards out, he suppressed his sur-prise long enough to poke the ball into the net.

left-wing cross with ease but the intervention of a lines-man. Like Yorke's FA Cup goal for Aston Villa on Sunday. Roy's first goal for nearly three months was stroked

As Leeds belatedly raised for a foul on Roy completed

Chotte, Philips. Cooper, Genmill, Bart-Wilhams, Woan, Silenzi (Howe, 78min). Lende 18-75.

two minutes later. Palmer should have cleared Roy's he clumsily used a hand. Alan Wilkie gave the penalty after

cious attempt to make Real

tional forward Michael

for Sheffield United.

a free transfer.

Laudrup his latest signing

Delayed shock was to set in

caught by his present last night when Rösler rolled in a simple equaliser six minutes from time to deny Southampton the pleasure of victory through Shipperley's goal midway through the second half. Ball must have been proud of the way his lads battled - both lots of them.

Southampton 1, Manchester City 1

Making his first return to The Dell Ball found little had changed. Southampton were much where he left them, hovering above the relegation zone and looking hopefully to Le Tissier. In the interim Ball has

found a cheque-book and gone into Europe in the only way City seem destined to do in the near future. He fielded three Germans — surely a first for British soccer — and a Georgian, Frontzec, like Clough making his debut.

Southampton were unim-pressed. Dave Merrington. Ball's successor, extended

game settled into a pattern of predictable movement, artless passing and easy interception.

City are short of goals, and in time Clough may go forward. Last night he was in midfield, without match sharpness but showing the old instinctive awareness. His union with Kinkladze romises well. Kinkladze and Rösler

wasted good chances and Quinn was slow to pounce when Beasant blocked and Hall cleared. On the halfhour Quinn headed down on the right and Clough fired City's best attempt of the half past the far post. Le Tissier had less excu to be off the pace and

Southampton seemed to look in vain for the magic that had saved Ball so many times. From a tapped free-kick he projected a firm but floating shot to the top corner, where Immel held it, but mostly his tricks turned into culs-de-

him "a special welcome" sac and frustration eventu-but the crowd's was ally took his season's tally top of a red. The game was looking

like a case for the Basic Skills Agency — passes, like commas, scattered at random — when the dead-lock was broken. Le Tisflung a 60-yard diagonal pass which Shipperley gathered beyond Symons and whacked inside immel's near post from 20

yards. It atoned for his miss just before, when Immel punched out Benali's cross and Shipperley headed over the unguarded goal. Nothing could redeem a

game that was mostly post-match summary was succint. "It was no classic," he said.

Southampton: Bessent; Dodd, Hall, Monkou, Bessit, Le Titeler, Magliton, Vanison, Watters (Cakiny, 83min), Shipperiny, Watters, Cakiny, 83min), Shipperiny, Watters, Curie, Symons, Frontzer (Brightwell, 83), Lomas, Filteroft, Clough, Kinkledze, Rösler, Quinn (Philips, 70), Beforces, Suno (Breitin).

Bosman rebels Ball rebounds with a point face huge fine

Russell Thomas

HE European Commis-sion will today tell Uefa officials face to face that they can expect a heavy fine if they resist the landmark Bosman judgment any longer. EC officials in Brussels are threatening the European game's governing body with a

seven-figure fine for failure to drop restrictions on foreign players in Uefa's three club The EC has already given Uefa six weeks to agree transfer changes in line with the Bosman ruling, which is now law, and drop its "three-plus-

two" player limit - three for eigners, two assimilated — in Commission insists that clubs may field as many European Union players as they want, and the deadline falls just befinal ties early next month.

Today's meeting will be closely monitored by Man-

representatives to Geneva next Wednesday for a Uefa conference of three clubs from each of Uefa's leading 12 associations.

There will be calls for a revamped European Cup and an enlarged Usfa Cup and Cup Winners' Cup. Widespread dis-satisfaction with Uefa's response to the Bosman ruling speculation that the meeting could spark a breakaway move for a television-driven

But the FA, whose chief ex-ecutive Graham Kelly will be Geneva, and the Premier League played down talk of an imminent Super League.

spokesman Mike Lee said: SVOR VE association is not on the agenda as far as we are con-cerned." The Premier League. he added, would resist any Uefa attempt to reduce European top divisions to 18 clubs. "We have reduced to 20 clubs, and talk of further reductions chester United, Arsenal and is not appropriate at this Liverpool, who are sending stage."

Ghana to go

DOUBLE shock was

Aserved up by the African Nations' Cup yesterday when

the favourites Ghana lost 3-0

in the semi-finals to South Af-

Ghana had as much of the

much-fancied Zambia 4-2

no further

Rowell: En lowin than

Blyth puts the sting

game in Johannesburg as their hosts but desnite hav. ing Tony Yeboah of Leeds United as their spearhead they were unable to turn their fluent attacks into goals. South Africa went ahead in

the 22nd minute through Moshoeu, who plays for Kocae-lispor in the Turkish league. Bartlett got their second im-mediately after the interval. Moshoeu scoring again three minutes from time. In Durban, Tunisia out-

played Zambia for the first 60 minutes to open a 3-0 lead with goals from Adel Sellimi, Beya and Kodhbane. Zambia pulled a goal back through Lota but Sellimi put a place in Saturday's final beyond doubt in the 85th minute with a penalty after Slimane had been

Results

Soccer FA CAPLING P Aston VIII: (0) 6 39,332 Nottos Forest (1) 2 Campbell 38 Roy 56 (pen)

West Ham (0) 3 Relper 46 Cattee 60, Dowie 80

Rendall is aware that Laudrup — elder brother of the Rangers forward Brian ENDSLEIGH LEAGUE First Division

his contract with Real and Second Division would then be available on **AUTO WEIDSCF**

Everton's Duncan Fergu-son will this morning be told he does not have to serve the remaining seven games' suspension of a 12gaine ban imposed more than 18 months ago for headbutting a Raith Rovers player. leraliture (0) Q

Third Divisio

Semi-final Southern Section Stewasbury (0) 4 Scott 46, Stevens 55 Brough 78 (og), Walten 66 TENNENTS SCOTTISH CUP

At a judicial review last month, Everton claimed that Ferguson was being punished twice, having spent six weeks in jail for the offence. Judge Lord Magfadyan will appears Hourts (ii) 1 Ritchie 63 (Hearts Eway to off on medical grounds.

On Monday. Newcastle

the fee in instalments.

Macfadyen will announce
Meanwhile, Howard Ken- his verdict today.

SCOTTISH LEAGUE

First Division

REPRESENTATIVE MATCHES: Civil Service 24, Royal Navy 40; Combined Lon-ton OB 24, RAF 14. Camballed: Edinburgh

Tennis

Basketball

GGE VAUXMALL CONFERENCE: (
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UNISOND ILEAGUE: President's First-coand replace Decisioned: §
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ngion.

I HSURANCE COMBINATION:
Division: Ipswich (), Bristol () 3.

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Swarsed 1. Bath 1: Plymouth 2. ice Hockey

Rugby Union

Fixtures Rugby League Soccer

SELK CUT CHALLENGE CUP: Re Four: Devisionry 12, London Bronco

SECOND ONE-DAY INTERNATIONAL (Wellington): Zimbabwe 181-8 (50 overs; G Flower 45; Nach 3-30) New Zestand-184-4 (93) overs; S Floming 70). New Zestand won by elv wickets and take an unbestable 2-0 lead in 8te three-match series. The final match is at Nepler on

NBAs LA Lakers 125, Golden Stein Houston 87, Chicago 98, Indiana 107, tente 90; Miamt 99, Phoenix 114; Orla 104, Boston 99; Minnesota 86, Denver Dallas 105, LA Cappers 101; Seattle

Snooker

Rugby Union

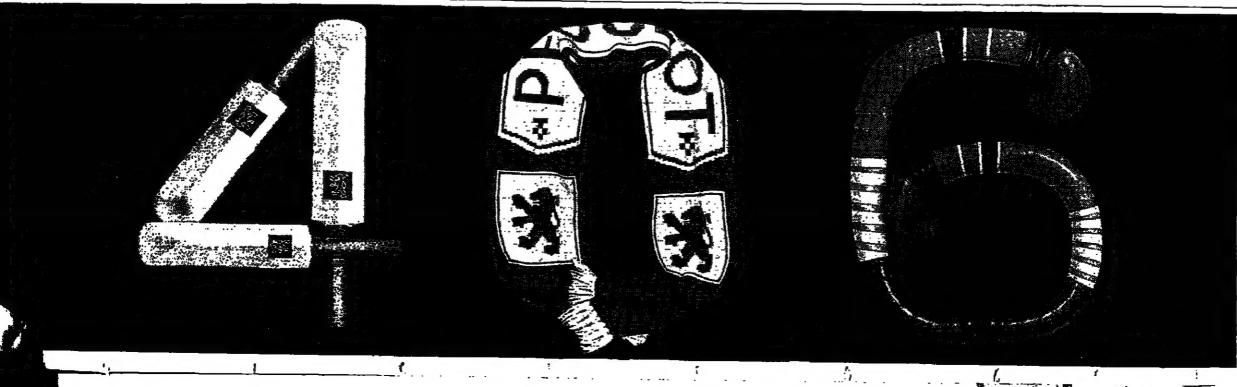
Rugby League

ice Hockey

Hockey

ERITISH LEAGUE: Fig Chelmstord v Guildford (I ough v Tellord (8.0).





IB digs its heels in over transfers

Robert Armstrong on the case that will test the 180-day qualification rule

Weir to Newcastle Gosforth were thrown into turmoil by a new International Board regulation on player move-ment announced yesterday.

The pair will have their case discussed by the Scottish Rugby Union after it has con-sidered the IB's stipulation of a 180-day residential qualifi-cation period for players who

the Scotland interna-tionals Gary Arm-strong and Doddie strong and Doddie early May. Pugh rejected the suggestion that the new IB regulation would contravene European employment law, though he conceded that it might be tested by a player in the courts.

The issue of freedom of movement for professional players was further clouded by an IB statement that. cation period for players who change clubs.
Vernon Pugh, the first elected chairman of the IB, said the Rugby Football Union would also have to adhers to the 180-day rule in whole," said Pugh, who added

Board tightens law on scrums

which remain bound each other better.
until the ball is out will become compulsory next season under a new law approved by the International Board at this week's annual meeting in London, writes

The conditions under which a line-out jumper can be supported have also been spelled out in detail, and a defender calling for a mark will no longer have to keep one foot on the ground when he catches the ball; the intention is to give him an equal chance to compete for the ball against onrush-

ing opponents.
The law-change on scrummaging should in theory make more playing space available to the backs, because loose forwards will be prohibited from detaching down opponents as soon as possession is lost.

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It will become harder to defend against five-metre scrums after the attacking

Robert Armstrong

HE England manager Jack Rowell yesterday offered praise for "the

refreshing-looking Welsh team" announced on Tuesday

but refused to give any com-

mitment to an expansive 15-man game of the type Wales

have promised to play. Rowell emphasised that his

priority is to win the match at Twickenham on Saturday

with a game plan that his

players know how to put into

effect.
"We played a traditional

England game against France but we made too many indi-

Moreover, the resem-blance of many union games to rugby league, in its practice of having two lines of opposing defenders strung out in a flat alignment, will cease. There could also be a renewed em-phasis on the value of a strong scrummage, espe-cially in the southern hemisphere where scrums are now widely regarded as a restart device.

The concept of support-ing without lifting a player has been clarified. Support can be given once the ball is thrown in and the player has begun his jump. The jumper can use either or both hands to catch or de-flect the ball, provided both hands are above his head; hitherto if deflecting the prematurely and closing ball he has had to use the

outside hand.
The tackle law has also changed. The obligation on scrums are likely to be tended to the tackler or safer because packs who tacklers.

Rowell: England prefer

to win than to entertain

mate Wales — I have seen Arwel Thomas play for Bris-

tol on several occasions and

their forwards certainly have ball-winning capacity."

The manager pointed out that his team had won 10

successive internationals, in-

cluding a Grand Slam, before

the more recent setbacks.

'Now we are into a new era, post-World Cup. We have six new caps in the side and I be-

lieve our players are bub-bling," he said. "I have never been able to predict the score or say how a

take part in a shoot-out in the latter stages," said Rowell and play it quickly."

"People should not underestiRowell suggested that pace

that the IB had taken the best legal advice on the matter. The immediate problem of whether Armstrong and Weir

Courage league matches for Newcastle Gosforth this season after moving from their Scottish clubs will be resolved only by a flexible in-terpretation of IB policy by the SRU. Fred McLeod, one of Scotland's two IB representa-tives, said his union "would not necessarily obstructive".

Armstrong's proposed move is complicated by the fact that the Jedforest scrum-half wants to continue to live in Scotland, making the 50-minute car journey to New-castle two or three times a week. In contrast Weir in-tends to leave Melrose and settle in Newcastle, which means he will ultimately ful-fil whatever residential

period is stipulated.
The IB's ambiguous role as The IB's ambiguous role as a policy-maker was high-lighted by Pugh's admission that the world governing body was "not a policeman". He explained: "The game has gone professional overnight and rugby is a world asset that we have to protect. We put the regulations in place and we must expect each and we must expect each union to abide by them."

Meanwhile, Lions' tours and tours by national sides were strongly endorsed by the IB as being "essential for the development of the game on a world-wide basis". The IB recommended that the length of tours might be reduced. with the unions given the flexibility to determine the

number of games scheduled.
The IB, which will shortly appoint a chief executive after the retirement of Keith Rowlands, has also agreed to Rowlands, has also agreed to move its headquarters from Bristol to Dublin, where it will enjoy tax advantages. Rugby World Cup Limited remains a separate offshore company, currently based in the Isle of Man.

The Scottish Rugby Union yesterday outlined its case for districts rather than clubs to represent Scotland in Europe

represent Scotland in Europe defend against five-metre strength in Depth, Success in scrums after the attacking his feet or to move away side gets the ball, and from the ball has been extended in advance of a special general meeting tomorrow week

would be a significant factor only given decent possession.

the work to show that they

"Scoring tries is not so much a matter of the deci-

sion-makers taking risks. Big

teams take their decisions

systematically and players in those teams do not deflect res-

England will hold a closed squad training at Richmond



Lord of the flies . . . Townsend has talent still untapped

Townsend enjoying a roller-coaster ride

as the game entered the final

minute. It was the champion-

ship's most sublime moment

as Bryan Redpath flung out the ball, Townsend found Ga-

vin Hastings with a clever

reverse pass and the captain steamed in from 30 yards to

ing his composure to convert

Still only 22. Townsend remains unfazed by his roller-coaster career. John Ruther-ford, arguably the finest Scot-

land stand-off in modern

times, has likened him to Jonathan Davies for his un-

bridled attacking skills. But

beneath the posts.

lan Malin on the trainee banker hoping to check France's progress at Murrayfield

T FLY-HALF there is plundered another try. Unnowhere to hide. As daunted, Townsend, who had playmaker the No. 10 already scored a try himself, calls the shots but is then set up the winning score also there to be shot at. And a sound defence also has to be

part of his armoury. It is a safe bet that at Murrayfield on Saturday afternoon Scotland's Gregor Townsend, the wey-faced young trainee banker, will "The pace of the game will come from winning the ball. I would not agree that the Welsh backs have greater pace than ours though possibly someone may have done the work to show that they have to grit his teeth and attempt to halt a charge or two from Abdelatif Benazzi, the fearsome French Moroccan who is arguably the finest back-row forward in the

northern hemisphere. Yet six months ago this pair were room-mates in the southern hemisphere when they spent part of the summer playing for Warringah, the Sydney side known locally as the Green Rats. Townsend was impressed with Benazzi's cookery skills and described his new pal as something of a

gentle giant". Gentle is something Saturday's game will not be, and it is another safe bet that Townsend will have a major say in its outcome and possibly the

He has already embraced triumph and disaster in fairly equal measures in this fixture. Two years ago, as a precocious 20-year-old, he stood mortified when, after working a clever Hastings, he saw his pass bound for Gavin Hastings stand up for Philippe Saint-André; France's captain raced like a man and was doing 50 yards for the decisive try in this side's 20 12 victory.

at the beginning of the cham-pionship it was touch and go whether he or the 29-year-old Lion Craig Chalmers would play at fly-half. Townsend, a No. 10 by inclination, was in the centre in Paris last year and has played there for his new club North-ampton this season.

Rutherford, the Scotland Under-21 coach, is in no doubt that Townsend should stay at No. 10. "If you want a standoff for a running game I can't think of anyone to rival him is an exciting player in an era where so many players seem

his side's 20–12 victory.

Last year in Paris Townsend's wayward kick failed to "You can't take your eye off

find touch and Saint-André him in opposition. He has ter- bration on Saturday night.

have to watch him all the time, and his running skills the Regal Welsh Open in New-give a back line so many op-tions. And going to North after the elimination of Duva, the American proampton has improved his game. He has matured nicely

under Ian McGeechan." In awful weather in Dublin 12 days ago Townsend was an ocean of calm while the storm and the green-shirted Ireland forwards raged. His little breaks and tactical kicking drove Ireland backwards in the gale. His game improved as that of his opposite number Eric Elwood disintegrated.

There was also the trade-mark drop goal from 40 yards. similar to an audacious kick against England two years ago. In the conditions it was especially impressive. He had a setback at the end

of last season when he tore cruciate ligaments in his something of a chance to

preaks of 35 and 33 to continue a week of upsets.

His semi-final opponent tomorrow will be the winner apparently without a care in the world. When you phone him at the Northampton him at the Northampton home he shares with his fellow international Michael Dods, a Highland jig plays on | English junior champion

the answerphone.
"I prefer playing at fly-half but enjoyed it in the centre last year because I saw more of the ball," he says. "I like to get involved and not just get three or four touches a

As Rutherford says, Gregor Townsend 'is 'maturing malts that Scotland's supporters could be downing in cele-

SPORTS NEWS 15

Sport in brief

Dope test pair allege restraint of trade

MATS WILANDER and Karel Novacek, who allegedly failed dope tests at last year's French Open, yesterday filed a writ in the High Court claiming that sections of the International Tennis Federation's rule 53, relating to appeals against positive drug tests, are a restraint of trade. writes John Duncon. The case will centre on part G4 of the rule, which puts the burden of evidence in an appeal on the player to prove his innocence by a preponderance of evidence. The pair's lawyers say this "guilty unless proven innocent" clause is unfair.

Peers fight for TV sport

A POWERFUL cross-party alliance of peers has tabled an amendment to the Broadcasting Bill to prevent satellite stations from gaining exclusive access to top sporting events, writes Andrew Culf. Eight "listed events", including the FA Cup final, Wimble-don and the Grand National, are prohibited from being screened on a pay-per-view basis but they can be shown on Sky Sports or other satellite and cable subscription channels. The amendment would ensure listed events were available to terrestrial viewers.

Stern tests for Britain

BRITAIN's men's and women's hockey teams will play against BRITAIN'S then's and women's noticely teams will play against potential Olympic medallists in the Pre-Atlanta International Tournament in Milton Keynes from June 13-16, urites Pat Rousley. The men will play Germany, Pakistan and Holland and the women Spain, Germany and Holland.

Hutchison strikes again

PAUL HUTCHISON, Yorkshire's England Under-19 page bowler. undermined Zimbabwe in the third and final Test in Bulawayo yesterday. He took six for 21 as Zimbabwe were dismissed for 143. By the close on the second day — the first was washed out — England were 96 for three.

Muster hits top spot

THOMAS MUSTER of Austria will replace Andre Agassi as tennis's world No. 1 when the ATP rankings are published on February 12. The American, who replaced Pete Sampras last week, is deprived of his position because the San Jose tournament is a week late this year and next week Agassi will lose the 206 in the position because the sample of the sample o

points he gained for winning there in 1995. Britain's Tim Henman defeated the American Jim Grabb 6–1. 7-6 and his compatrot Mark Petchey beat Patrick Baur of Germany 6-4, 6-4 to reach the Shanghai Open quarter-finals, where they will play each other tomorrow.

Collins drops "spook"

STEVE COLLINS, the WBO super-middleweight champion, has dispensed with the services of the hypnotist Tony Quinn, who was given some of the credit for the Irishman's two defeats of Chris Eubank, Paul "Scrap Iron" Ryan, the British and Commonwealth light-welterweight champion from Hackney, will defend his WBO Intercontinental title against Antonio Strabello of Italy at the

Snooker

Ebdon joins vanquished

PETER EBDON yesterday joined the mighty to fall at the Regal Welsh Open in Newpromptly went out 5-3 to the 20-year-old Welshman Mark Williams in the quarter-

finals.
"I am bitterly disappointed but Mark played exceptionally well and I didn't do a lot wrong." said Ebdon. who besides winning November's Rothmans Malta Grand Prix has reached two other finals and three semi-finals this

"It's a sickener because I know I'm playing close to my best. I made the most of my opportunities, but he just

played out of his skin." Ebdon three times went the odd frame in front through knee in Gala's last game of breaks of 73, 74 and 108. At 3-3 the season against Hawick. breaks of 73, 74 and 108. At 3-3 The injury caused him to seventh, obtaining three of miss the World Cup, and the summer trip to Australia was and in the eighth he led 25-0 but Williams got in with breaks of 35 and 33 to con-

Darren Morgan and Dave Harold, who beat Hendry.

Paul Hunter, the 17-year-old from Leeds who had to start at the first qualifying round. has dropped only nine frames in 10 matches and counts Nigel Bond amongst his scalps.

He appears fearless, like many a young player with everything to gain and little to lose, but tonight he faces formidable opposition on his television debut. He plays Drew Henry, the Scot who has deprived Steve Davis of the last title he held.

Boxing

Lewis staying with the Duvas

Kevin Mitchell

ENNOX LEWIS'S manager Frank Maloney yesafter the elimination of Duva, the American pro-Stephen Hendry and John Higgins on Tuesday, he worked closely, had led to the cancellation of the April contest between Lewis and Riddick Bowe.

The fight is off only be-cause of Bowe's contractual row with the American pay-TV network HBO, backer of the non-title contest, he said. "Lennox will definitely fight on April 20," added Maloney, who now deals with Duva's brother Dino. He flies to New Jersey today

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SK Sport

Blyth puts the sting in England A's tail

France A in recent weeks, took another scalp at Leicester yesterday with a 24-22 win over New South Wales.

It came thanks to an injury-time try from the West Hartlepool centre Andy Blyth converted by Alex King.
The tourists, who included

10 full internationals, had looked set to maintain their 100 per cent record when they led 22-17 as the game went into injury time. But two quickly taken tap penalties and all three tries. The first stemmed from a break down the left by Adebayo; from a scrum just

Brance A in recent weeks, took | from right to left and Blyth | Greenwood dived over. accelerated through a gap to

level the scores. In a bitter wind there was in a outer wind there was initially little to warm the crowd. The game was ill-tempered and just before half-time the NSW prop Richard Harry was shown the yellow card after foul play in the scrum. But the sacond half-readment

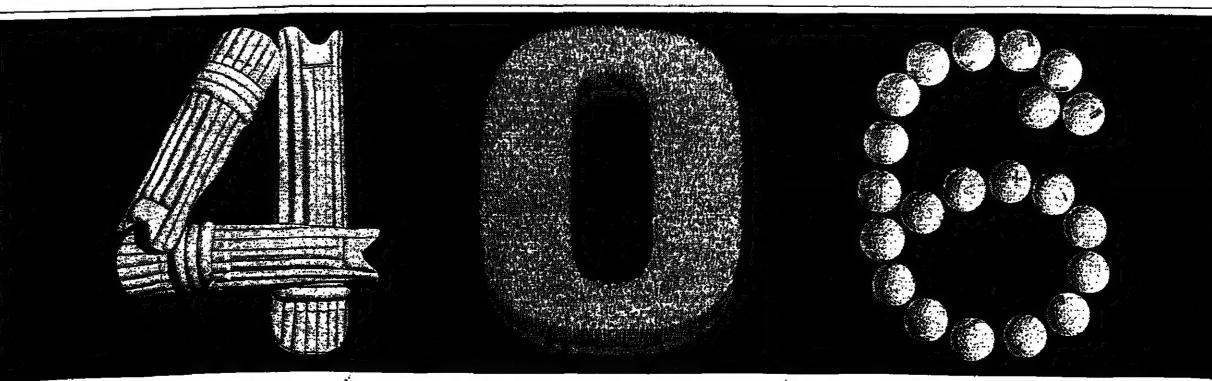
But the second half produced

ENGLAND A: T Stimpson (W Hartiepo) P Hvill (Bristol), A Blyth (W Hartiepo)

but we made too many indi-vidual errors and we gave the French the opportunity to outs. We must also take the

SCORERS: England A: Tries: Greenwood, Blyth Conversion: King, Penalties: King 2, Stimpson 2, New South Whele: Try Manu, Conversion: Burke, Penalties: Date 5,

Privil (Bristo), A Slyth (W Hartlepool), W Greenwood (Harlequins), A Adelego (Bath): A Kleej (Bristo) Univ), A Healey (Orrell): R Hardwick (Coventry), R Cook-ers, D Genforth (both Lelectry), J Freefer (Sale), G Archer, M Corry (both Bristol), A Diprose (csp), B Hill (both Sarstens), NEW SOUTH WALES M Burks, A Mitridoch, J Mads, R Tomba, D Campeses Sisseen, S Payne, R Harry, H Ball, H Hartill, W Wargh, S Dottons, W Ofsbergman, D Rham, T Carele (csp)).



SportsGuardian

COLLYMORE AND FOWLER CONTINUE SCORING RUN AT VILLA PARK

Premiership: Aston Villa 0, Liverpool 2

Liverpool stay in the hunt

David Lacey HE Championship is still Newcastle's to lose, but St James' Park cannot enjoy quiet slum-bers just yet. If nothing else, the quality of Liverpool's foot-ball at Villa Park last night should have warned Kevin Keegan's players against

complacency.

After an bour of absorbing football, two goals in five minutes from almost inevitably. Stan Collymore and Robbie Fowler brought Liverpool in sight of the win they needed to go above Manchester United into second place. Aston Villa had their

chances but their attack pos-sessed nothing like Liver-pool's cutting edge and that, in the end, was the crucial

Unless Newcastle do a Devon Loch and fall at a phantom hurdle, teams like Villa and Liverpool will be playing for the silver medal this season, and the accompanying assurance of a Uefa Cup place if all else fails. Yet having taken 18 points out of 24 in their eight previous eight league fixtures. Liverpool arrived at Villa Park looking more like the Anfield saved their best for the New

The run owed much to the burgeoning partnership of Fowler and Collymore, who between them had scored 17 times in nine games. Last night, however, they faced not only a Villa side beaten just twice in 17 matches but the Premier League's foremore exponents of a defension. most exponents of a defensive system employing three cen-

The ability of McManaman, with his spindly slightly hunched gait, to take on defenders with the ball was evi-dent from the start. Within gate on the outside before see first fully co-ordinated attack

might have brought a goal. Charles cleverly released Johnson on the right and Draper met the resulting pass into the middle with a shot that James pushed aside.

Liverpool were having more difficulty breaking down their opponents' defence, very little escaping the attention of McGrath, but when Collymore and Fowler did make contact with each score from the rebound



Fighting it out . . . Tommy Johnson of Aston Villa (left) battles for the ball in midfield with Liverpool's Steve McManaman at Villa Park last night

r the right flank opened | Ehiogu had lunged across | sessive passing game was | much more of the possession. | lymore, this one heading for Similarly, Aston Villa's up for McAteer, and Collymore was not too far away from the centre.

In the 26th minute Liver-pool did everything right — except score. Barnes collected a ball from Collymore before setting up McAteer for another cross which this time found Collymore heading down hard for goal.

Bosnich was equal to the moment, however, saving su-perbly and before Jones could him to whip the ball clear. That was the nearest either eam came to scoring before half-time, although Liverpool suffered slight tremors as James had to sprint 40 yards

to prevent Yorke exploiting a sluggish offside trap and only a masterful interception by McGrath denied Fowler a shooting opportunity after Collymore's through ball had caught Villa square.

gaining them the upper hand. Barnes had a gloved hand on their pulse, McAteer and Jones were making more runs on the flanks and Collymore and Fowler were always on the prowl near goal. Aston Villa were no less a

threat on the break and early in the second half Yorke met a centre from Johnson with a mid-air volley which rocketed

caught Villa square.

Slowly. imperceptibly almost, Liverpool's patient, possion Liverpool were enjoying

Two minutes later the Villa goalkeeper managed to tip away another shot from Col-

dian delegates' support for this view. The political and

organisational ramifications would be impossible to

Jagmohan Dalmiya, secre-

tary of both Pilcom and the Indian cricket board, merely

promised that "the situation is being monitored".

risdiction and is loth to be-come involved. "The World

Cup is being organised by Pil-com; it is nothing to do with us," said one spokesperson yesterday. Was that the ICC's

official comment? "No. our

official comment is 'No

Australia have already can-

They want to pinpoint genes that

measured by IQ scores, and they

a few people about it as possible.

plan to do the work while telling

influence intelligence, as

A minute past the hour they began to enjoy the lead. Villa gave away two free-kicks in quick succession near their second of these Barnes teed the ball up for Collymore. Bosnich, partly unsighted, was deceived by the late swerve of Collymore's shot and ended up going the wrong

way. Two minutes later the Villa

another couple of minutes Liverpool scored again. Fowler stepped over a pass from McAteer, allowing it to run to McManaman sprinted on to meet McMana-

man's pass before placing a careful shot beyond Bosnich's PERCE.

MeGrafin, Wright, Southgate, Draper.
Townsond, Johnson, Yorke, Milcowic.
Liverpoot: James; McAteer, Scales,
Ruddock, Bath, Jones, Thomas, Barnes,
McManaram, Colynore, Fowler.
Reference R Driess (Mossiey).

the top far corner, but after

An invasion of Barboured barbarians



Mike Ellison

F ONLY it could have been the Irish. Such lovely people when they're not killing each other, lots of fun and they have a proper perspective on the game. Bet-ter than that, they can usually

be relied upon to lose. But on Saturday it's the Welsh who will be teaming up the M4 trailing memories of when they once had a decent side, bringing gridlock and their special brand of lachry-mose sentimentality to the pubs and pavements of Twickenham

The rest of the country thinks nothing but rugby hap-pens there. With all due respect to the hairdressers, & tate agents, Indian restau-rants and charity shop manag ers who ply their trade in the place, there is some truth in the notion.

There is no cinema, no proper theatre and the old in-door swimming pool is derelict. It must have the only high street in the country without an Our Price record store. But it's got trees and parks, it's on the river, and there is at least one pretty street in the centre You can tell it's pretty by the cobblestones and antique

shops.
Then there are the celebrities. Pete Townshend of The Who lives in Tennyson's old house, the talevision execu-tive and rodent fancier Greg Dyke is nearby, and Peter Green, the sadly distracted great lost British guitar hope. used to skulk around Twickenham's streets. It's only a pity Leslie Crowther moved place. Except on rugby days

OU could say that there are only a few of them each year and the game puts the place on the map. But people who live there know where they are, they don't need Bill McLaren to tell them.

You could say that Wembley has to put up with as many people for soccer matches, but that area of north London is a feature-free sprawl which could hardly be diminished by the arrival of even the most vulgar herd of yobs. As for Lord's and The Oval, so few people go to cricket matches that the pleasant environments of St John's Wood and

mected. Twickers. The very word is enough to make you cringe. It means bores in blazers and Barbours: hampers in the car park; boozing on the avement; corporate enterainment; horrible communal singing: from the better class of supporter, supercilious airs; from the born-again boor, absolutely no graces

One of Twickenham's grimmer pubs is buried under a huge office block like an industrial-strength forward at the bottom of a collapsed scrum. But the skilled malehander will be in, or more likely outside, one of the pubs on Church Street, robbing the little road down to the river of some of its twee charm. Real veterans might make their way to The Rifleman, some way from the ground, on Fourth Cross Road.

Here they can pick up a ticket just before the game from a tacitum Irishman without paying a hefty mark-up. It's that easy. Until you try to do it yourself, of course. That's what's happened to the game since it became a spectator sport so popular that some of the fans were not even at a decent school.

convenient place to of-fend the locals is just across the road from the rallway station, in the Cabbage Patch, which has the additional benefit of an historical association with the game. Bad though it is on Five Nations days, some of the detail is lost when this lot are encountered en masse. The full foulness of their calling is better captured after a relatively ordinary match. Take Harlequins versus

West Hartlepool at The Stoop. Will Carling's first outing after his wife took an early bath in a fury over his impec cable royal connections. The match out of the way, a bloated brute in a plastic Ving helmet led 20 acolytes to the Cabbage Patch and a table which they thumped vigorously smid grunts and broad-sides of ale. By the time they had finished it was not Mrs

Carling you felt sorry for. These are the people who, in between choruses of Swing Low Sweet Chariot, pass the hours until speech is beyond them wondering why soccer fans can't behave properly. Then their wives come for to carry them home.

Rugby days are only half as bad when Wales are England's opponents. It's not that the Welsh are in any way halfhearted at the bar before the match. But they tend to disap-pear rapidly after yet another promising failure on the pitch.

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World Cup bomb worry

Australia may forfeit their opening match in Sri Lanka, reports David Hopps

ORLD CUP cricket such soft targets would be organisers will regarded as totally counterresist any pres- productive. sure to cancel matches in Sri Lanka in the rake of the terrorist bomb in

Colombo vesterday. Australia immediately admitted grave reservations opening fixture against Sri Lanka in the capital on February 17. Their coach Bobby Simpson asked: "Who wants to be around when bombs are going off."

But the World Cup organis-ing committee. Pilcom, will be unsympathetic to any requests to reschedule matches at such a late stage. Australia — or West Indies, Zimbabwe or Kenya — refuse to fulfil their match in Sri

Lanka they will be assumed to have forferted it. Ana Punchiheva, the presi-dent of the Sri Lankan Cricket Board and one of its two representatives on Pil-com, said last night: "When something like this happens, cerned. But historically no sporting events, or tourists. have ever been targeted by the Tamil Tigers. To attack celled a pre-tournament train ing camp in Colombo because of death threats to their play-ers arising from their Test and one-day series against the Sri Lankan tourists.

The Australians, at a meet ing in Adelaide last we "There isn't a place in the world that isn't dangerous to considered forfeiting their opening match against Sri some extent. I don't expect the but were persuaded World Cup organising com-mittee to press for any not to, after assurances that they would receive the level changes. Why should they?"
Only an unexpected escala of police and army protection normally afforded to a visittion in hostilities would undermine Pakistani and In-

ing head of state.
That decision will be reviewed in the light of yes-terday's outrage, which took place in the heart of the busi-ness district less than a mile from the team's Colombo hotel.

"We'll wait for the guidance of [Australian] government officials on the spot rather than make premature judg-ments on immediate media reports," said Simpson. "But The International Cricket Council, purportedly the world governing body, regards the World Cup organisation as outside its jurisdiction and to let be the programme of the let be the second to b with bombs going off it's not

very pleasant." Such is the structure of the World Cup, with only two countries' teams in each group of six falling to reach the quarter-finals, that Australia could forfeit their opening game and still expect to qualify with ease. Umpires in the World Cup are to wear black coats in

Guardian Crossword No 20.564

Across 7 Ready as can be, I suppose

8 Isn't into cunning, being very good (7)

10 Begins drunken sprees (6)

11 Perhaps Ned does right to 12 Stake for backing a mount - may be hotly tipped (4)

13 Killjoy pollutes what's left 14 Hailing distance? (6,5) 19 A rousing outdoor

performance (4,6) 22 Saline drip? (4) 23 Couple hired to make

lewellery (8) 24 Get alf — it's on fire! (6)

25 Drunk as a snake? (7) 26 Sign of fever, perhaps, and Down

1 Show strain (7) 2 Russian insect with stripes? (8)

3 Forms with no head girls 4 When upset, Don is held by one chap or another (8)

5 New organisation takes blame for cover up (6) 6 Legal or otherwise, it's a

lively movement (7) 9 Show how devil and saint rank in estimation (11)

15 Extreme scepticism (8) 16 Sweeping away the

17 Type of pigeon basket (7) 18 Feature film about the Middle East? (7) 20 She brings firm into line,

21 Add salt and pepper as

Solution temorrow

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